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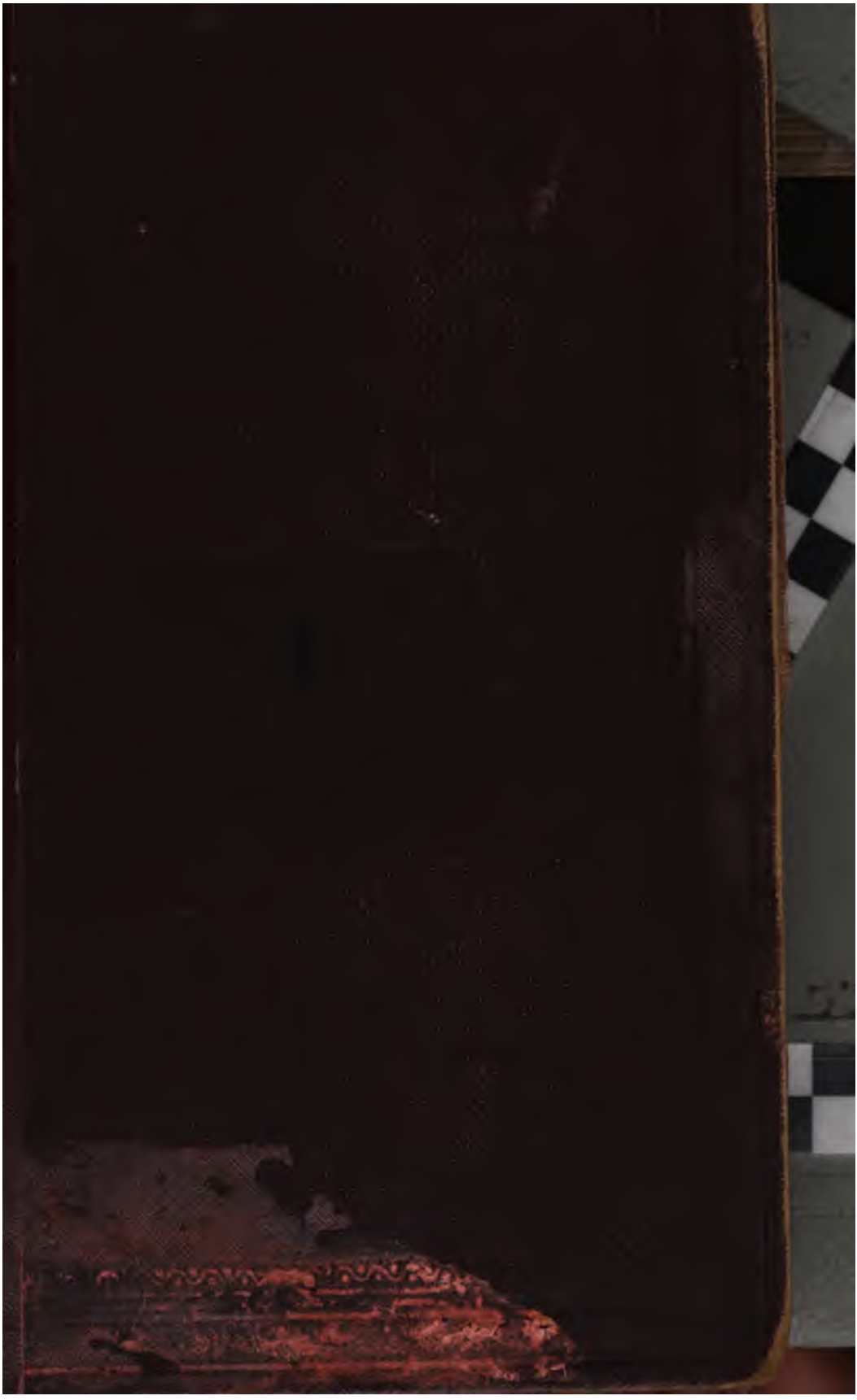

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WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES

BY

REV. WHITWELL ELWIN

AND

WILLIAM JOHN COURTHOPE.

VOL. V.

THE LIFE AND INDEX.

WITH PORTRAIT.

'DIFFICILE EST PROPRIE COMMUNIA DICERE.

LONDON:
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TO

THE VERY REVEREND

CHARLES JOHN VAUGHAN, D.D.,

DEAN OF LLANDAFF; MASTER OF THE TEMPLE;
HEAD-MASTER OF HARROW SCHOOL BETWEEN 1844–1859;

AND TO

THE VERY REVEREND

HENRY MONTAGU BUTLER, D.D.,

MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
HEAD-MASTER OF HARROW SCHOOL BETWEEN 1859–1885;

This Volume,

CONTAINING THE 'LIFE OF POPE,'

IS

VERY GRATEFULLY DEDICATED BY

THEIR FORMER PUPIL,

THE AUTHOR.

FRONTISPIECE.

—•—

BUST OF ALEXANDER POPE,

From the Original Clay Model in the possession of Mr. JOHN MURRAY, the Publisher.

PREFACE.

In excuse for the delay in the appearance of the volume that completes this Edition, I have only to plead limited leisure, and the difficulties inherent in a subject as thorny and intricate as has ever served to perplex a biographer. The least of these is the task of giving an appearance of freshness to a tale which has been already ten times told. It is evident that the many new facts respecting Pope and his surroundings which have been brought to light in the present generation, and the marked changes which have manifested themselves in the taste of society, have rendered it necessary to set the character and genius of the poet in a light different from that in which they were presented by earlier critics. The really perplexing problem is how to place these new facts and these changes of taste in such just perspective and proportion, as may at once satisfy the claims of truth, and do justice to the memory of one of the most famous names in English Literature.

All the early biographies of Pope, with the exception of Johnson's, have, more or less, the character

of critical pamphlets. Each of them betrays very plainly the hand of a partizan, and a determination to support some theory in regard to Pope's character and genius. They thus form the links in a long chain of literary controversy. Warburton's edition is an answer to Bolingbroke's attack upon Pope's memory: Warton's Essay on the Genius of Pope answers Warburton: Bowles' edition embodies and extends the principles of Warton: Roscoe's is a criticism of the criticism of Bowles. Wherever personal questions arise, the particular animus of the literary critic is always apparent in the work of these biographers. They make no attempt to elucidate the private and social allusions in Pope's satires, and though some of them are ready enough to enliven their narratives with gossip injurious to his character, they are very careless about investigating its truth. This period of biography is fitly closed with the general controversy in the years 1819–1825 respecting the moral and poetical character of Pope.

In the last generation there was a reaction to the opposite extreme. After the first Reform Bill the taste for personal history and antiquarianism rapidly increased. Numerous critics now began to interest themselves in studying the life of Pope from a merely personal point of view. Of these by far the most eminent was the late Mr. Dilke, to whom, more than to any other man, biographers of Pope are indebted for

the materials enabling them to form a just idea of his character. Acute, accurate, and industrious, he spared no pains to penetrate the mystery in which the poet loved to involve all his actions. The example set by his papers in the 'Athenæum' was widely followed, and every recorded incident in the poet's life was subjected to a rigorous examination, which led to many discoveries of real importance, but which undoubtedly tended to overload the whole subject, and to submerge all sense of proportion in a mass of insignificant detail. The typical biography of this period is that by the late Mr. Carruthers, which is admirable for its painstaking research and the popularity of its style, but which suffers from two serious defects. The first edition appeared before the revelations of Mr. Dilke in the 'Athenæum,' and though the second edition was largely remodelled in consequence, it is obvious that the newly discovered facts had been published too late to enable the author to alter his work as completely as circumstances required. Moreover Mr. Carruthers altogether ignored the critical questions that are involved in Pope's life and works. He seemed to be unaware that in the previous generation there had been a controversy as to the poetical merits of Pope half as long as the siege of Troy; and he was content to dismiss this part of the subject with the observation, that "criticism on the poet's works has been exhausted: his position as an

English classic has long been fixed." Within a year after these words were written the late Professor Conington, in an essay which is a model of sound and masculine criticism, examined Pope's claims to that pre-eminence in 'correctness' which had previously been disputed by De Quincey and Macaulay, while during the last ten years Pope's poetical aims and his place in literature have been discussed with the greatest diversity of opinion by many writers, including scholars of such eminence as Mr. Mark Pattison, Mr. Matthew Arnold, and Mr. Leslie Stephen.

In dealing with the personal side of Pope's history, I have endeavoured to follow, as far as possible, the good example set by Johnson. Johnson well understood the tortuous tendencies in Pope's character; but he knew that, in writing the life of a poet, it was not his main business to moralize on his defects as a man. His essay has therefore an air of impartiality which distinguishes it honourably from the performances of Pope's other biographers. It shows neither the literary partizanship of Warton, nor the censoriousness of Bowles, nor the sophistry of Warburton and Roscoe, but gives a lively and well-proportioned estimate of Pope's genius, with just incidental reflections on such passages of his conduct as naturally call for observation. Pope's genius cannot be understood without reference to his moral character, but on the other hand his moral character must be judged

in connection with his literary career. I have therefore arranged the different chapters of this biography according to the leading episodes of his poetical life, a division by which the development of his motives and character can be exhibited without any serious departure from the natural sequence of events.

The Life of Pope also involves critical questions of the deepest interest, and in this part of the subject I have discussed, with some minuteness, the nature and extent of his poetical aims as defined in his own phrase of 'correctness.' I have pleased myself with thinking that, in following this course, I should have had the sympathy and approval of a friend to whose judgment, taste, and learning I owe a debt of gratitude that I can never sufficiently acknowledge. In the Essay on Pope to which I have already alluded, Conington examined in considerable detail the meaning of the word 'correctness.'[1] I am happy to find myself in substantial agreement with his conclusions, but whereas he limited his criticism to illustrating the operation of the principle in Pope's own works, I have attempted to show its bearing on the course of English poetry both before and after the age of Pope. I am far from flattering myself that, though treating the question as a whole, I have been able entirely to suppress those personal inclinations by which every

[1] Miscellaneous Writings, Vol. I., pp. 3–16.

man who engages in a great controversy of taste is unconsciously biassed. But whether the opinion of the poet's merits offered in the concluding chapter be well-founded or not, I may be allowed to hope that, by this historical treatment of the subject, it will be possible to conduct any future discussion as to his place in English Literature on grounds more definite and positive than the arbitrary principles which governed the controversy in the early part of this century.

In acknowledging the assistance received in the course of my work, my thanks are in the first place due to the Marquis of Bath for the courtesy with which he has allowed me to transcribe from MSS. preserved at Longleat the letters actually written by Wycherley to Pope, and thus to complete the evidence as to the methods adopted by Pope in preparing his correspondence for publication. I should naturally desire to express my obligations to all the works of living authors which I have consulted for the purposes of the present volume. But they are too many to enumerate, and I must confine myself to mentioning, among those which I have consulted with most advantage, Mr. Leslie Stephen's Life of Pope in the 'Men of Letters' series, Mr. Gosse's Life of Gray in the same series, Mr. J. A. Symonds' 'Renaissance in Italy,' Mr. A. J. Butler's Dante, and Mr. Churton Collins' 'Bolingbroke.' I have also read with great

interest a very valuable and suggestive Essay on Pope in the number of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' for March, 1888, by M. Emile Montégut, which shows the effect that the poet's work still produces on the best minds in foreign countries. Finally I must return my sincere thanks to Mr. Fortescue, Superintendent of the Reading Room of the British Museum, for the unfailing kindness he has shown in providing me with every convenience for research on the too few occasions on which I have been able to avail myself of the resources of the Museum Library.

W. J. C.

ERRATA.

Pages 62 and 356. *For* "Conceptualists" *read* "Conceptistas."

Page 104. *For* "quatre temps on vigile," *read* "quatre temps ou vigile."

„ 153. *For* "letting his imagination monopolise the action he was about to describe in English verse," *read* "letting the action, &c., monopolise his imagination."

„ 170. Stanza ii. v. 1. *After* "Did I not see" *insert* "thee."

„ 186. Note 2. *For* "Vol. X." *read* "Vol. IX."

„ 246. In sentence beginning: "It does not indeed follow that, because he failed," *omit* "that."

„ 262. *For* "to whom he was married later in the same year," *read* "to whom he had been married earlier in the same year."

„ 291. *For* "clandestine correspondence" *read* "clandestine publication."

„ 349. *For* "when she wrote to him her first dated letter," *read* "when he wrote to her, &c."

„ 359. *For* "for forms of faith" *read* "for modes of faith."

„ 371. *For* "by the common language of the peasantry," *read* "in the common language, &c."

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THE LIFE

OF

ALEXANDER POPE.

Alexander Pope
from the Original Bust
by Roubillac
in the possession of John Murray.

THE LIFE

OF

ALEXANDER POPE.

By WILLIAM JOHN COURTHOPE, M.A.

'DIFFICILE EST PROPRIE COMMUNIA DICERE.'

WITH PORTRAIT AFTER THE BUST BY ROUBILLAC.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
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LIFE OF POPE.

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE AND EDUCATION.

1688—1700.

Alexander Pope was born on the 21st of May, 1688, a year which, in its relation to the character of his genius, and to the direction which under his influence English literature took during the eighteenth century, is full of interest and significance. Seven months later in the same year James II., by his flight from England, left vacant the throne of his ancestors, and severed the links which had hitherto bound the crown to the people. Up to this date the caprice or discretion of the reigning Monarch had been among the most powerful factors in the formation of English taste. Elizabeth and the first three Stuarts had all possessed enough of literary instinct to leave an impress of their character on contemporary poetry, while the Court, as the central institution of English social life, had exercised a controlling influence over every art that addressed itself to the imagination. The painter, the musician, the player (the King's peculiar servant) the University student, made it the object of their respective ambitions to paint the Sovereign's portrait, to solemnise the services in his Chapel, to relieve the tedium of his leisure moments, and to separate his language in as marked a manner as possible from the idiom of the vulgar. Hence, when the legitimate branch of the House of Stuart was excluded from the succession, the hereditary throne

exchanged for one resting on a Parliamentary title, native sovereigns succeeded by kings who neither understood the language nor shared the sympathies of the people, the same causes which had effected a breach in the continuity of political order, produced also a revolution in the form of literary expression.

With the hereditary Monarchy, declined, if it did not immediately disappear, the spiritual influence which had hitherto moulded the taste and imagination of Society. Though the Reformation had vitally affected the national spirit, the mediæval system of theology, retaining its hold on the institutions of the country, had preserved the old forms of expression with but slight external modifications. Elizabeth and her two immediate successors, strongly Anglican in their principles, leant to the ceremonial of the ancient Church: Charles II. and James II. were secret or avowed Roman Catholics: the Universities kept up in their lectures and disputations all the framework of the scholastic logic. In a thousand subtle ways the education of the country was affected by modes and methods of thought having their roots in the old forms of religion. A Revolution, which had for its main object the establishment of a Protestant dynasty, necessarily produced a corresponding effect on the hitherto unbroken tradition of Catholic scholasticism.

This scholasticism had been faithfully reflected in the poetry of the seventeenth century. It had mixed itself even with the Puritanism of Milton, who, in his 'Paradise Lost,' as Pope afterwards said with justice, often makes 'God the Father turn a school divine.' The controversy between the Churches had formed the argument of Dryden's 'Hind and Panther,' as the general religious uncertainty of the times had found expression in his 'Religio Laici.' Most of all had the spirit of the schools influenced that remarkable series of poets from Donne to Cowley, generally known by the title of 'metaphysical,' in whose works, as in a mirror, may be seen, at their last ebb, the play of the time-honoured ideas which had once inspired the fancy of mediæval Europe. On the other hand, the forms

and forces, out of which was to spring the new social fabric, were at the date of Pope's birth already manifesting themselves. While the philosophy of Bacon had not yet superseded that of Aristotle in the studies of the Universities, the inductive methods of science were always winning in society at large an increasing number of adherents. Locke's 'Essay on the Understanding' was completed the year before the Revolution; and the same year had seen the publication of a book which was itself to revolutionise the world of physical science—the 'Principia' of Newton. The Deists also, who, since the days of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, had been a growing sect in England, now began to exercise a perceptible influence on the course of religious thought.

Similar tendencies were visible in the sphere of written language. The place of the accent on words was indeed almost settled, and for nearly a century the poets had contracted the final syllable 'ed' in the past participle, an important step towards the definite determination of the standard; but traces of the old fashion still remained in some of the inflexions of verbs, and in the use of the expletives 'do' and 'did.' A certain conscious archaism of thought, encouraged by the example of Spenser, had been cultivated late in the seventeenth century by the 'metaphysical' school of poets, while affectations in language of an exactly opposite kind were practised by the imitators of classical antiquity, either, as in the case of the Euphuists, by the excessive use of antithesis, or by the lavish coinage of words derived from the Latin. Between these two extreme tendencies the new school of poetry, founded by Waller, was gradually forming a poetical diction on social idioms, refined by the style of the best classical authors, with whose works the general reader was becoming familiar through the medium of frequent translations. Thus in all directions, amid the clash of opposing forces, Catholic and Protestant, Whig and Tory, Aristotelian and Baconian, Mediævalist and Classicist, the year 1688 found society in England in a state of unsettlement and confusion.

The poet who learned to harmonise all these conflicting principles in a form of versification so clear and precise that for fully a hundred years after he began to write it was accepted as the established standard of metrical music, occupied politically and socially a position of remarkable isolation. His parents were, both of them, Roman Catholics. Of his father's family very little is certainly known. When Pope was engaged in his war with the Dunces, the latter sought to mortify him by taunting him with the obscurity of his birth, pretending in various pamphlets that he was the son of a bankrupt, a hatter, or a farmer.[1] By way of reply to these false reports the poet credited himself with a lineage much more splendid but no less fabulous. In his 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' he asserted—

> "Of gentle blood (part shed in honour's cause
> While yet in Britain honour had applause)
> Each parent sprung—"

and in a note on another verse in the poem he said: "Mr. Pope's father was of a gentleman's family in Oxfordshire, the head of which was the Earl of Downe, whose sole heiress married the heir of Lindsay."[2] The Earl of Guildford, however, who inherited the estates of the Earls of Downe, and had examined their descent, could find in it nothing to confirm this claim, and a cousin of Pope's, Richard Potinger, said that he had himself never heard of this 'fine pedigree,' and "what is more, he had an old maiden aunt equally related, a great genealogist, who was always talking of her family, but never mentioned this circumstance,—on which she certainly would not have been silent had she known anything of it. Mr. Pope's grandfather was a clergyman of the Church of England in Hampshire. He placed his son, Mr. Pope's father, with a merchant at Lisbon, where he became a convert to

[1] See note to 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' v. 381. He was called the son of a farmer in 'Farmer Pope and his Son,' published in 1728.

[2] Note to v. 381.

Popery."[1] Accepting this statement, which appears to be made on good authority, it would appear to be not improbable, though it is by no means certain, that the poet's grandfather was one Alexander Pope, Rector of Thruxton in Hampshire, who died in 1645.[2] Alexander Pope, his son, and the poet's father, is said to have been a posthumous child.[3]

On the mother's side the lineage can be much more easily traced. The note in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' before referred to says: "His mother was the daughter of William Turner, Esq., of York; she had three brothers, one of whom was killed; another died in the service of King Charles; the eldest following his fortunes, and becoming a general officer in Spain, left her what estate remained after the sequestrations and forfeitures of her family." The Turners were a family of small landowners in Yorkshire, the founder of which, Robert Turner, acquired some wealth as a wax-chandler in the reign of Henry the Eighth.[4] One of his descendants, Philip Turner, married Edith, the daughter of William Gylminge, vintner of York, and had seven children, of whom William, the father of the poet's mother, was the fifth. To him Lancelot Turner, his uncle, bequeathed the bulk of his fortune, including the manor of Towthorpe, and a rent-charge on the manor of Ruston, which came into the possession of Pope's father on his marriage into the Turner family, and is mentioned in his will. William Turner married Thomasine Newton, a member of a good family at Thorpe, in Yorkshire, and had by her seventeen children, Edith, the poet's mother, and her grandmother Turner's namesake, being one of them. Of the other children, besides the sons mentioned in the note in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' the only one connected with the history of the poet was Christiana, who married Samuel Cooper, a portrait painter of reputation, and a friend of Butler, author of

[1] Warton's edition of Pope's Works, vol. iv. 53.

[2] 'Pope: his Descent and Family Connections.' By Joseph Hunter.

[3] P. T. to Curll. See Vol. VI. 423.

[4] 'Pope: Additional Facts concerning his Maternal Ancestry.' By Robert Davies.

'Hudibras.' Christiana's husband died in 1672. She herself lived till 1693, and remembered in her will her nephew, Alexander Pope, who was also her godson. She leaves him "my painted China dish, with a silver foote, and a dish to sett it in, and after my sister Elizabeth Turner's decease, I give him all my bookes, pictures, and meddalls, sett in gold or otherwise."

Edith Turner was Alexander Pope's second wife. On his return from Lisbon he seems to have followed the trade of a linendraper in Broad Street, London, and the Register of St. Bennet-Fink shows that on the 12th August, 1679, he buried his first wife, Magdalen, by whom he had one daughter, the Magdalen Racket whom the poet frequently speaks of in his correspondence as his sister.[1] After his second marriage he removed his business to Lombard Street, where his son was born, both parents being at the time more than forty years old. From this date up to the little Alexander's twelfth year, when, as he himself tells us, his father removed him to Binfield, the history of the family is almost a blank. There is nothing to show how long the father continued to pursue his business, or when he acquired the property at Binfield. He seems to have made a small fortune in trade, which, according to Hearne the antiquary, an accurate reporter, brought him an income of three or four hundred a year.[2] It has been assumed on the most shadowy evidence that, before making his purchase in Windsor Forest, he resided at Kensington;[3] on the other hand it is natural to suppose that many reasons may have conspired to make him desire a residence at some distance from London immediately after the Revolution;[4] nor can anything be argued from his son's expression, recorded by Spence, that when he was about twelve years old 'he went with his father into the Forest.'[5]

[1] 'Papers of a Critic,' p. 176.
[2] 'Hearne's Diary,' 1718, Dec. 17.
[3] Bowles' 'Life of Pope,' p. 18.
[4] This is P. T.'s account as given to Curll in 1733 (see Vol. VI. p. 424), and there does not seem to be any reason for disbelieving it.
[5] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 193.

Such a phrase may mean no more than at this age he was taken from school to live at home.

Very little is recorded of his childhood. Mrs. Racket, his half-sister, relates that, while he was a child in coats, a cow, that was being driven by the place where he was at play, struck at him with her horns, tore off his hat, wounded him in the throat, and trampled on him.[1] In these early days his shape, it appears, was not deformed. A cousin of his, a Mr. Mannick, told Spence that, in the picture of him drawn when he was about ten years old, his face was round, plump, pretty, and of a fresh complexion, and that it was the perpetual application he fell into in his twelfth year that changed his form and ruined his constitution.[2] He is said to have been a child of a particularly sweet disposition, which exhibited itself in the musical tones of his voice, so that his friends called him 'the little nightingale'; and this characteristic, according to Southerne the dramatist, survived even in the vexations and animosities of his declining years.

His education was superficial and desultory. He tells us that he was taught his letters by an old aunt, perhaps—for he was a precocious child—his godmother, Christiana Cooper. Writing he learned for himself by copying printed books, a practice which he long continued. Johnson pronounces that "his ordinary hand was not elegant," but this judgment seems to have been founded on the observation of the specimens preserved in the 'Translation of the Iliad,' an obviously unfair test. Richardson, son of the painter, on the other hand, who was well acquainted with his writing, after transcribing the various readings of 'Windsor Forest,' adds in a note, "Altered from the first copy of the author's own hand, written out beautifully, as usual, for the criticism and perusal of his friends." All the fair copies of Pope's MSS. that I have myself seen entirely

[1] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 5. A slightly different account of the same incident was given by Mrs. Racket on another occasion, see Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 267.

[2] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 26.

justify this description; the character of the letters is fine, clear, and scholarly.

His first regular instructor was Bannister, a Roman Catholic priest, who, after the manner of the Jesuits, taught him Latin and Greek at the same time. This was when he was eight years of age. In the following year he was sent to a Roman Catholic seminary at Twyford, near Winchester.[1] Here, according to his own account, he unlearnt whatever he had gained from his first tutor, and was in a little time removed by his parents, in consequence of a severe whipping from his master, on whom he had written a satire.[2] He was next placed under the charge of one Thomas Deane, who kept a school, first at Marylebone and afterwards at Hyde Park Corner. Deane had been a Fellow of University College, Oxford, and is described by Anthony Wood as "the creature and convert" of the notorious Obadiah Walker, Master of that College in the time of James II. After the Revolution he was declared 'non-socius,' and he appears to have been zealous in defence of his principles, for Wood says that in 1691 he stood in the pillory under the name of Thomas Franks.[3] It may be supposed that his sufferings enlisted the sympathies of the Roman Catholics, who, in spite of his glaring incapacity as a schoolmaster, helped him to support himself by teaching. Pope says that all he learned under him was "to construe a little of Tully's Offices."[4] His scholars were left to follow their own devices, and Pope took advantage of his leisure to compose here his first and last

[1] Mr. Carruthers rather needlessly supposes that Twyford in Berkshire may have been the place where Pope was at school. Pope himself told Spence that it was Twyford near Winchester (Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 8). The Roman Catholic school in this place seems to have been discontinued about the beginning of the last century, and was succeeded by the well-known Protestant school which still flourishes, and which, in the time of Warton, who was Head-Master of Winchester, had appropriated the honour of having had a share in Pope's education.

[2] Mrs. Racket's evidence in Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 206.

[3] Anthony Wood's 'Athenæ Oxonienses,' vol. iv., p. 451.

[4] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 204.

acted tragedy by stringing together a number of speeches out of Ogilby's Homer interspersed with verses made by himself. His schoolfellows were persuaded to perform this; the part of Ajax being played by Deane's gardener. Vain, meddlesome, and, as the poet describes him to Caryll, "all his life a dupe to some project or other," Deane, while he thus neglected his immediate duties, saw his school gradually decline; and in 1727, being once more in prison, he applied for relief to Pope, who, with his usual ready benevolence, took steps to keep him out of the way of harm and publication by providing him with a small pension.[1] After leaving Deane's school he was taken by his father to the Forest and placed under a fourth priest, with whom he only remained a few months. "This," he says, "was all the teaching I ever had, and, God knows, it extended a very little way." [2]

The circumstances of Pope's birth and education give him an exceptional place among the English poets, and must be taken into account in judging of his character and conduct in episodes which will hereafter be described. No English poet had yet been trained in a manner so independent of the life and institutions of his country. Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Dryden, and Addison were all members of an English University: the three last had been educated in the great English public schools, in which they had acquired an early appreciation of the general principles of English society, and of the accepted standards of taste and language. Pope, on the other hand, lived all his early life in the solitude of Windsor Forest, the child of parents imperfectly educated and indulgent to his every whim, and under the religious guidance of those who, themselves proscribed and persecuted, regarded with perhaps not unnatural indulgence the use of equivocation as an instrument of self-

[1] See Letter to Caryll, March 28 [1727]. Deane died at Malden Nov. 10, 1735. It would seem probable that he subsisted for the latter years of his life on Pope's pension. 'Athenæ Oxonienses,' vol. iv., p. 451.

[2] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 193.

defence.[1] The effect of this early isolation on his character was unquestionably pernicious. In the sole company of his books he acquired habits of self-consciousness that clung to him through life. He knew nothing of that manly conflict between equals which does so much to strengthen and correct the character of boys in an English public school. He thus entered upon his struggle with society with a boundless appetite for fame, but with his vanity and self-will fostered by the admiring fondness of all about him, and with an ignorance of the measure applied by public opinion to the tricks and plots for which he had by nature a strong propensity.

Intellectually, on the other hand, his secluded education was not without its advantages. He himself told Spence that he thought his want of a public school training had been no loss to him, as he had been forced to read for the sense, whereas schoolboys generally were forced to read for the words—a judgment which he afterwards embodied in the last book of the 'Dunciad,' where he gives what pretends to be an accurate description of the methods of instruction practised in English schools:

> "To ask, to guess, to know, as they commence,
> As fancy opens the quick springs of sense;
> We ply the memory, we load the brain,
> Bind rebel wit and double chain on chain;
> Confine the thought to exercise the breath,
> And keep them in the pale of words till death."[2]

In this opinion there was more pique than sincerity, for no one can have known better than himself, after all his labours of translation, the value of verbal scholarship, and none would have been quicker to acknowledge it, if it had not been for his quarrels with Bentley and Theobald. But beyond scholarship, public school discipline would have added little to his mental resources. The course of learning it prescribes is, by general acknowledgment, well qualified to develop taste

[1] See letter from Pope to Teresa Blount of Aug. 16, 1716.

[2] 'Dunciad,' Book IV., 155. Compare also Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 280.

and discernment, but Pope had from nature what others acquire by cultivation, a judgment preternaturally strong and penetrating, and an instinct of propriety hardly ever at fault. His mind, equipped with an exquisite sense of form and order, rather than fertile in original thought, required to be stimulated by the conceptions of others, so that the irregular course of self-education which he pursued served admirably to expand his genius.

"When," he said to Spence, "I had done with my priests, I took to reading by myself, for which I had a very great eagerness and enthusiasm, especially for poetry: and in a few years I had dipped into a great number of the English, French, Italian, Latin, and Greek poets. This I did without any design but that of pleasing myself, and got the languages by hunting after the stories in the several poets I read; rather than read the books to get the languages. I followed everywhere as my fancy led me, and was like a boy gathering flowers in the field just as they fell in his way."[1]

Such desultory reading would have been almost impossible for him at a public school; it would certainly have been disapproved. Joseph Warton was a man of taste and refinement, but he was a typical schoolmaster, and his strictures on the Roman poets of the post-classical ages suggest the amount of indulgence which would have been shown at Winchester or Westminster to Pope's liking for Statius. "It were to be wished," he says, "that no youth of genius were even suffered to look into Statius, Lucan, Claudian, or Seneca, authors who, by their forced conceits, by their violent metaphors, by their swelling epithets, by their want of a just decorum, have a strong tendency to dazzle and mislead inexperienced minds and tastes unformed from the true relish of possibility, propriety, simplicity and nature."[2] Sound enough in respect to the ordinary schoolboy, Warton's principle was inapplicable to Pope, who, far from succumbing to the brilliant extravagance of the second-class poets he read, was led to

[1] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 193.
[2] Warton's edition of Pope's Works, vol. ii. p. 169.

compare them with the greater writers, and with each other, and from the materials so constructed generalised code of taste, which afterwards so materially influenced his own methods of composition.

As regards action and incident, the years that he spent in the retirement of Windsor Forest are naturally uneventful; but in so far as they exhibit the growth of his mind, his boyish attempts at composition, the difficulties he experienced, his gradual progress through failure and experiment to a right understanding of classical principles in art, they are full of interest for the biographer. The history of this early poetical development, therefore, must form the subject of the two following chapters; and if I am unfortunate enough to tax the patience of the reader, by dwelling with some fulness on the critical questions that are involved, I would ask him to remember with indulgence that this is necessary in order to explain the full significance of the movement which Pope originated in English literature.

CHAPTER II.

IMITATIVE PERIOD OF COMPOSITION.

Life at Binfield—Translation of Statius—The 'Pastorals'—'Windsor Forest'—'The Messiah.'

1700—1712.

BINFIELD, near Wokingham, in Berkshire, is a straggling parish of about five miles in length. The church and a considerable part of the modern village lie under the shelter of a hill, but the house occupied by the Popes was near the highest ground, which commands in every direction extensive and beautiful views. Hence the eye wanders, as Pope's no doubt often did, towards the open heath lands about Ascot, the undulating well-wooded ranges towards Windsor, and the more distant blue line where the Oxfordshire hills descend to the river above Marlow. Much of the timber in the neighbourhood has been cleared within the last hundred years and the land brought into cultivation, and farm buildings, cottages, and villas, have sprung up on all sides; but at the beginning of the eighteenth century the absence of houses and tillage, and the luxuriant growth of oak, elm, and birch, must have more completely satisfied that idea of romantic solitude which is suggested by the name of Windsor Forest.

In this woodland retreat the elder Pope had bought a house and twenty acres of land. The former, altered and added to by successive occupants, contains now of the original building only one room, which is supposed to have been the poet's study. This, and a row of noble Scotch firs, whose girth

suggests great age, are all that remain to illustrate the description of his dwelling:

"A little house with trees a-row,
And like its master, very low."

The choice of a residence was no doubt determined by the fact that numerous Roman Catholic families were settled in or near Windsor Forest. Among those that were most intimately associated with the Popes, and whose names occur oftenest in the poet's correspondence, were the Dancastles, who, since the days of Elizabeth, had been lords of the manor of Binfield; the Englefields of Whiteknights; and, farther off, the Blounts of Mapledurham. Both Alexander Pope the elder, and his wife, were strict Roman Catholics, and devout to an extent which was somewhat harassing to their son, though he conformed to their ways from a strong sense of filial duty.[1] His father is said, like himself, to have been crooked, but not of an unsound constitution; 'healthy from temperance and from exercise,' as he was afterwards described in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot'; an enthusiastic gardener, whose skill was much admired by his neighbours.[2] He seems also to have had some literary taste, having early encouraged his son to write verses, and being a severe critic of his performances. The same can scarcely be said of his mother, for though he afterwards gave her pleasure by allowing her to try to copy the rough draft of his 'Translation of the Iliad,' we may imagine what the result is likely to have been from the spelling in the only remaining letter which she addressed to him.[3] From her he inherited a propensity to violent headaches.

Of the general character of the society in the neighbourhood of Binfield, Pope has left a vivid sketch in a letter written at a later date to Cromwell:—

"I assure you I am looked upon in the neighbourhood for a very sober and well-disposed person, no great hunter indeed, but a great

[1] Letter from Pope to Cromwell of April 10, 1710.

[2] See letter from Dancastle to Pope, Vol. IX., p. 487.

[3] See Vol. IX. p. 479.

esteemer of the noble sport, and only unhappy in my want of constitution for that and drinking. They all say 'tis pity I am so sickly, and I think 'tis pity they are so healthy; but I say nothing that may destroy their good opinion of me. I have not quoted a Latin author since I came down; but have learned without books a song of Mr. Durfey's, who is your only poet of tolerable reputation in this country. He makes all the merriment in our entertainments, and but for him there would be so miserable a dearth of catches, that I fear they would *sans cérémonie* put either the parson or me upon making some for them. . . . Neither you with your Ovid, nor I with my Statius, can amuse a whole board of justices and extraordinary squires, or gain one hum of approbation, or laugh of admiration. These things, they would say, are too studious; they may do very well with such as love reading; but give us your ancient poet, Mr. Durfey." [1]

This is the letter of one wit to another, and must therefore not be taken too seriously. The satire is inapplicable to at least two of Pope's near neighbours,—Englefield of Whiteknights, a man of some taste and literary refinement; and Thomas Dancastle, the Squire of Binfield, whose admiration for the poet's genius was so enthusiastic that he transcribed for him the fair copy of his 'Translation of the Iliad.' Nevertheless, it may readily be imagined that Pope did not find in the society about him much that was congenial with his temper; hence he no doubt fell at an early age into those habits of introspection which throughout his life betray themselves so unmistakably in his style. His mornings were occupied with desultory rambles through English, Latin, and Italian literature; in the afternoon in long solitary walks, or with only the company of his dog,[2] he would meditate in Priest's Wood on what he had just been reading; and each day was closed with an attempt to reduce to writing the thoughts that crowded his imagination. In his twelfth year he wrote the first draft of the 'Ode to Solitude,' and the paraphrase of Thomas à Kempis; while the germs of his satirical genius show themselves in the verses addressed in his fourteenth year to the author of 'Successio,' one

[1] Vol. VI. p. 91.

[2] Letter to Cromwell of Oct. 19, 1709.

couplet of which he afterwards inserted in the 'Dunciad.'[1] He told Spence that when very young he completed a tragedy on the Legend of St. Genevieve. He wrote also, while between thirteen and fifteen years of age, an Epic poem, of which the hero is variously stated by himself to have been Deucalion and Alcander, Prince of Rhodes.[2] It was about four thousand lines in length. "I had the copy by me," the poet told Spence, "till I burnt it by the advice of the Bishop of Rochester a little before he went abroad."[3] From this poem, too, he preserved in his usual economical fashion a couplet for use in the 'Essay on Criticism':—

> "Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
> As streams roll down enlarging as they flow."

And another in the 'Dunciad':

> "As man's meanders to the vital spring
> Roll all their tides, then back their circles bring."

His judgment, however, told him that, as a whole, these boyish efforts were futile. "My first taking to imitating," he says, "was not out of vanity, but humility: I saw how defective my own things were, and endeavoured to mend my manner by copying good strokes from others."[4] He seems in these words to be referring to his 'Translation of the First Book of the Thebais of Statius,' whom after Virgil he preferred, at least in his younger days, above all Latin poets. The first draft of this translation was made, according to his own account, in 1702 or 1703, and though it was not published till 1712, when much had been added to it, and the whole severely corrected, yet, as it is not likely that he took the trouble to make the translation

[1] "As clocks to weight their nimble motion owe,
The wheels above urged by the wheels below."
SPENCE, 'Anecdotes,' p. 279.

[2] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' pp. 24 and 276. Some episodes in the poem are mentioned on p. 279.

[3] In fact, he burnt it of his own accord. Atterbury approved the sentence, but regretted that no fragment of the poem had been preserved as a specimen. See Atterbury's Letter to Pope of February 18, 1717.

[4] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 278.

entirely afresh, it is fair to assume that the body of the composition is preserved in its original form. It is therefore of the highest interest, as the first well developed example of a style which was to become famous; and the question naturally arises by what means, at so early an age, he had acquired his harmonious system of versification.

It is often said that Waller was the first of English poets to write couplets after the fashion that prevailed in the latter half of the seventeenth, and all through the eighteenth century. But this statement requires to be precisely limited. Waller was no doubt the earliest of our writers who, after the language assumed anything approaching fixity, paid attention to the genius of the heroic measure. "When he was a briske young sparke," says Aubrey, "and first studyed poetry, 'Methought,' said he, 'I never saw a good copie of English verses: they want smoothness: then I began to essay.'"[1] But in truth the epigrammatic capacity of the couplet is contained in the metre itself; couplets as concise and trenchant as those of Dryden and Pope are to be found in the 'Prologue to the Canterbury Tales,' as for instance in the portrait of the Monk—

> "I saw his sleves purfiled at the hond
> With gris, and that the finest of the lond.
> And for to fasten his hood under his chinne,
> He had of gold y-wrought a curious pinne:
> A love-knotte in the greter end ther was.
> His hed was balled and shone as any glas,
> And eke his face as it hadde ben anoint.
> He was a lord full fat and in good point.
> His eyen stepe, and rolling in his hed,
> That stemed as a forneis of a led."

Similar metrical effects may be found in almost every poet who has used the measure between Chaucer and Waller.[2] Chaucer, however, writing before words had received their

[1] Aubrey's 'Lives of Eminent Men,' Vol. II. Part 2, p. 563.

[2] There is a specially notable instance in Spenser's 'Mother Hubbard's Tale,' in the passage beginning "Full little knowest thou that hast not tried."

settled accent, observed a system of harmony of his own: that is to say, he did not confine the sense to the couplet, but carried on his sentences from one couplet to another, frequently ending them with the first of the two rhymes. His successors in the Elizabethan age followed his practice of the *enjambement*, as it is technically called, but neglected the limitations he imposed on himself, letting their fancies run on luxuriantly from verse to verse, in the manner rendered familiar to the readers of Keats' 'Endymion.' Waller, as has been said, was the first to make a step towards the later methods of versification by restricting the sentence to the couplet; but the more subtle developments of the measure, depending on the variation of the cæsura, and the balance of one couplet against another, were due to a less famous author, George Sandys, the translator of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses.'

Sandys is praised both by Dryden and Pope as one of the chief refiners of our language. The former indeed blames him for the too great literalness of his translation. "He leaves him (Ovid)," says he, "obscure; he leaves him prose where he found him verse. . . . This is at least the idea which I have remaining of his translation; for I never read him since I was a boy." [1] But the very closeness at which Sandys aimed in his rendering, tended to import a new character into the treatment of the couplet. The limitations of rhyme forced him to compress as much of the sense of the original as he could into the bounds of his measure; he endeavoured to reproduce exactly the rhetorical turns of the Latin; and he was evidently impressed by the analogy between the cæsura of the hexameter and the various syllables of the heroic metre, on which it is possible to make the pause. The result of his experiment is seen in verses like the following, which appear at least as remarkable as Waller's lines on 'The Prince's Escape at Saint Andero,' considering

[1] Preface to Translations from Ovid's 'Metamorphoses.'

that they follow Marlowe's 'Hero and Leander' at an interval of only forty years, and precede Pope's earliest published translations by more than seventy years.

"O sister, O my wife, the poore remaines
Of all thy sex, which all in one containes!
Whom human nature, one paternal line,
Then one chaste bed, and now like dangers joyne!
Of what the sun beholds from east to west
We two are all: the sea entombs the rest.
Nor yet can we of life be confident;
The threatening clouds strange terrors still present.
O what a heart wouldst thou have had, if Fate
Had ta'en me from thee, and prolonged thy date!
So wilde a feare, such sorrows, so forlorne
And comfortlesse, how wouldest thou have borne!
If seas had sucked thee in, I would have followed
My wife in death, and sea should me have swallowed.
O would I could my Father's cunning use,
And soules into well-modelled clay infuse!
Now all our mortal race we two contayne;
And but a pattern of mankind remayne."[1]

Dryden, an original poet like Waller, and a voluminous translator like Sandys, united in his style the smooth elegance of the one master and the measured cadence of the other. The ardour of his mind, however, prompted him to vary his use of the couplet, as much as possible, by the introduction of triplets and Alexandrine verses. Pope made him his chief model in composition. "I learned versification," he told Spence, "wholly from Dryden's works; who had improved it much beyond any of our former poets; and would probably have brought it to perfection had not he been unhappily obliged to write so often in haste."[2] Stories are told on the authority of some of his friends of an interview he had with Dryden, when he was twelve years old, to which, say some, he had stolen away from the Forest, while others report that the old poet gave him, by way of encouragement, a shilling for a

[1] Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' (Book I. 352) Englished. By George Sandys, 1634.

[2] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 281.

translation he made of the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. Johnson, in his Life of Pope, moralises on the incident: "Dryden died May 1, 1700, some days before Pope was twelve, so early must he therefore have felt the power of harmony and the zeal of genius. Who does not wish that Dryden could have known the value of the homage that was paid him, and have foreseen the greatness of his young admirer?" It is almost a pity to disturb such an agreeable legend, but as Pope's biographers say that he did not begin the study of Dryden till he was twelve years old, and after his removal to Binfield, and as Dryden had for some time before his death been a cripple confined to his own house, the tale about the coffee-house and the shilling can hardly be accepted as veracious history. All that Pope himself says is that he saw Dryden when he was about twelve years of age,[1] but that he was not so happy as to know him.[2]

What he learned from Dryden in versification was the art of expressing the social and conversational idiom of the language in a metrical form. His conception of metrical harmony was, however, altogether different from his professed master's, and rather resembled that of Sandys, whose translation of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses' he told Spence he had read when very young, and with the greatest delight.[3] He explains the system in a letter to Cromwell dated November 25, 1710.

"(1.) As to the hiatus, it is certainly to be avoided as often as possible; but on the other hand, since the reason of it is only for the sake of the numbers, so if, to avoid it, we incur another fault against their smoothness, methinks the very end of that nicety is destroyed; as when we say, for instance,

'But th' old have interest ever in their view,'

to avoid the hiatus,

'The old have interest.'

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[1] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 332.
[2] Letter to Wycherley of Dec. 26, 1704.
[3] Spence, p. 276.

Does not the ear in this place tell us that the hiatus is smoother, less constrained, and so preferable to the cæsura?[1]

(2.) I would except against the use of all expletives in verse, as *do* before verbs plural, or even too frequent use of *did* or *does* to change the termination of the rhyme; all these being against the usual manner of speech, and mere fillers-up of unnecessary syllables.

(3.) Monosyllable lines, unless very artfully managed, are stiff, languishing, and hard.

(4.) The repeating the same rhymes within four or six lines of each other, which tire the ear with too much of the like sound.

(5.) The too frequent use of Alexandrines, which are never graceful, but where there is some majesty added to the verse by them, or when there cannot be found a word in them but what is absolutely needful.

(6.) Every nice ear must, I believe, have observed that in any smooth English verse of ten syllables, there is naturally a pause either at the fourth, fifth, or sixth syllables; as for example, Waller:—

At the fifth—

'Whene'er thy navy spreads her canvas wings,'

At the fourth—

'Honour to thee, and peace to all she brings.'

At the sixth—

'Like tracks of leverets in morning snow.'

Now I fancy that, to preserve an exact harmony and variety, none of these pauses should be continued above three lines together, without the interposition of another; else it will be apt to weary the ear with one continued tone—at least, it does mine."

When he published his correspondence he re-addressed this letter to Walsh, and dated it October 22, 1706. Though it is not probable that it was really written so early, the 'Translation of Statius,' and the 'Pastorals,' both show a strict attention to the rules here specifically laid down. Now there are very few of these rules which Dryden does not violate. He apologises, indeed, for the liberties he takes with regard to the hiatus, or, what he calls the rule of "synalepha," which he discusses at length in his Preface to the translations from Ovid's 'Metamorphoses;' and there are probably fewer lines made up of monosyllables in his poems than in Pope's. Expletives are not frequent with him, but he does not systematically avoid them, and he was much too rapid a writer to be careful about repe-

[1] He seems here to use 'cæsura' in the sense of 'elision.'

titions of sound. As to the nice variation of the pauses in the line, on which Pope lays so much stress, Dryden can scarcely be said to have regarded the couplet itself as the basis of metrical harmony. His verses have often no cæsura, in the places prescribed by Pope, lines like the following being common in his poems:

"No sooner had the goddess ceased to speak,"

or,

"Which myriads of our martial men surround."

His sentences often overflow from one couplet to another, and his triplets and Alexandrines were much more frequent than his successor approved. On the other hand, the reader will find in the typical passage from Sandys cited above all those varieties of pause which constitute the harmony of the metre, as it was understood by Pope, and which are studiously observed in his Translation of Statius. Pope did not, indeed, strictly conform to his own rule. Owing to the great number of monosyllables in English there is a natural tendency to make a pause on the fourth syllable of the rhyming heroic line; the majority of Pope's verses break at this place; and he not seldom repeats the effect through considerably more than the three continuous lines he allows as a limit; the first five lines of his Translation from Statius, for instance, all make the pause on the fourth syllable.

There is another point in which the style of Pope, in his earliest translation, differs fundamentally from Dryden's. The latter sought above all things to reproduce the *spirit* of his original in an English dress. Pope, on the contrary, as he himself confesses, was at this period of his life essentially an imitator, who aimed as much as possible at rendering the *style* of the Latin. By a curious coincidence he had pitched upon an author who stood in almost the same relation to one of his poetical predecessors, as he himself for the moment stood to Dryden. There is scarcely a striking episode, an ingenious

turn of phrase, or a musical effect of metre in Virgil, which has not been imitated and extended by Statius; only, while the aim of the former was always to present noble matter in a noble form, the imagination of Statius, working on a subject of inferior interest, was wholly occupied with inventing ingenuities of expression. It was natural that a boy like Pope should be caught with the cleverness of Statius, and natural too that, in attempting to render it by means of such artifices as he could find in the English poets, he should insensibly form a poetic diction of his own. The most superficial reader can hardly fail to observe the gulf that separates his manner from Dryden's. The increased stateliness in the movement of the verse, the varied pauses, the calculated alliteration, the balance of one line against another, and the nice adjustment of each part of the couplet to the whole, all announce that a new master of melody has risen among the English poets. At the same time many crudities of style betray the boyish hand of the writer; more particularly the evident enjoyment with which the extravagances of Statius are loaded with additional conceit; the strained antithesis; the excessive number of verses in which two substantives, each accompanied by an epithet, are coupled together with an iteration producing monotony. For instance—

> "Nor yet attempt to stretch thy bolder wing,
> And mighty Cæsar's conquering eagles sing,
> How twice he tamed proud Ister's rapid flood,
> While Dacia's mountains streamed with barb'rous blood."

Exaggerated as the mannerism is, however, there is no denying the exquisite softness and sweetness of lines like these:—

> "'Twas now the time when Phœbus yields to night,
> And rising Cynthia sheds her silver light.
> Wide o'er the world in solemn pomp she drew
> Her airy chariot hung with pearly dew;
> All birds and beasts lie hushed; sleep steals away
> The wild desires of men, and toils of day,
> And brings descending through the silent air
> A sweet forgetfulness of human care."

The translation of Ovid's 'Epistle from Sappho to Phaon' 'which is, however, of later date having been written according to Pope himself in 1707 is even more felicitous. The hand of the genuine poet is unmistakable throughout this composition. It is beautifully harmonious, and the many original touches it contains show all the romantic sensibility which afterwards gave warmth and animation to the 'Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard.'

It will thus be seen that Pope in his early years had formed a new mould of metrical expression, partly by observing the gradual development of the heroic couplet, partly by assiduous attempts to reproduce classical forms of phraseology in English idioms. Insensibly, by this practice of composition, he began to set before himself, though at present dimly and imperfectly, that standard of writing which he afterwards made famous under the name of *correctness*. This word is inseparably associated with the name of William Walsh—'knowing Walsh,' as Pope afterwards called him when he mentioned him among his early friends—a man then well known as a critic and leader of the fashion. Pope told Spence that he had made the acquaintance of Walsh when he was about fifteen. This is an error, as Walsh had not been introduced to Pope when he wrote to Wycherley about him on April 20, 1705, and the first letter in their correspondence is dated June 24, 1705. Assuming, however, that they first became acquainted when the poet was just seventeen, it is plain, from the letters that passed between them, that Walsh was giving Pope advice in the sense reported by the latter to Spence: "He used to encourage me much, and used to tell me there was one way left of excelling: for though we had several great poets, we never had any one great poet that was *correct;* and he desired me to make that my study and aim."[1]

What did Walsh mean by "correctness?" It is commonly supposed that he meant no more than accuracy of expres-

[1] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 280.

sion. The correspondence between him and Pope, however, shows clearly that what he had in his mind was not only this, but also propriety of design and justice of thought and taste. Pope, writing to him on July 6, 1706, asked his opinion as to how far the liberty of borrowing may extend. Walsh replied on July 20, 1706:—

"The best of the modern poets in all languages are those that have the nearest copied the ancients. Indeed, in all the common subjects of poetry, the thoughts are so obvious, at least if they are natural, that whoever writes last must write things like what have been said before: but they may as well applaud the ancients for the arts of eating and drinking, and accuse the moderns of having stolen those inventions from them, it being evident in all such cases that whoever lived first must find them out. It is true, indeed, when

"Unus et alter
Assuitur pannus,"

when there are one or two bright thoughts stolen, and all the rest is quite different from it, a poem makes a very foolish figure; but when it is all melted down together, and the gold of the ancients so mixed with the moderns, that none can distinguish the one from the other, I can never find fault with it."

This is good sense, and is only a variation of Horace's text—

"Difficile est proprie communia dicere;"

and of Pope's—

"True wit is Nature to advantage dressed,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed."

Nevertheless, the whole drift of Walsh's criticism, as preserved in his letters to Pope, shows that he comprehended imperfectly the vital meaning of Horace's maxim; and the best proof of his superficiality is the exaggerated praise which he bestowed upon Pope's 'Pastorals.'

These poems were the latter's first serious effort in original composition; and they seem to have owed their origin to the following circumstances. Between his twelfth and seventeenth year, his too constant course of study began seriously to injure his health: he fell into a state of depression, and imagined

that he had not long to live. He wrote to his various friends, bidding them farewell, and among others to Thomas Southcote, a member of an old Catholic family in the neighbourhood of Abingdon, who, taking a less gloomy view of his case, went off at once to consult Radcliffe, the most famous physician of the day. Radcliffe, divining what was wrong, prescribed a strict course of diet, ordered that the boy should relax the severity of his studies, and advised a daily ride in the Forest. His instructions were obeyed with the happy result that the poet rapidly regained his health and spirits. He always retained a grateful recollection of the service Southcote had done him, and twenty years afterwards, hearing that an Abbey in France, near Avignon, was vacant, and being then on good terms with Sir R. Walpole, he procured through the latter's influence with Cardinal Fleury, that it should be presented to his friend.[1]

His new course of life brought him a valuable literary acquaintance. In the neighbourhood of Binfield is Easthampstead Park. It had originally been a royal residence, and James I. had occupied it as late as 1623, but it was soon afterwards granted by Charles I. to William Trumbull, agent for James I. and Charles I. at Brussels, and one of the Clerks of the Privy Council. Certain conditions appear to have been attached to the grant, for a petition of William Trumbull in 1661 states that 'his father had a grant from the late King, in reward for thirty years' service, of Easthampstead Park, Co. Berks, being chiefly barren heath, at a rental of 40*s.*, on condition of his keeping two hundred deer there for his Majesty's recreation,' and 'begs release from the said condition on increasing the rental to £10, as the deer there have been universally destroyed, and it is almost impossible to obtain any.'[2] The occupant of the Park at this time was Sir William Trumbull, who having served his country in various diplomatic

[1] Spence, p. 6. The story is somewhat differently related in Ruffhead's Life of Pope, but on such a point Spence's authority may be regarded as superior.

[2] State Papers, Domestic Series, 1661, 1662, Petition of William Trumbull, presented Aug. 20, 1661.

capacities in Tangier, Florence, Turin, Paris, and Constantinople, and having afterwards been made by William III. a Lord of the Treasury, and Secretary of State, had resigned the office in 1697, and had now come to pass the close of his life quietly at Easthampstead. He had been a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and, retaining all his old scholarly tastes, was delighted to find in Pope a companion with whom he could talk freely of the classics in his retirement. The latter says that they used to take a ride together three or four days in the week, and at last every day, and it may be safely assumed that the idea of the 'Pastorals' was the fruit of their intercourse.[1] The first of them is inscribed to Trumbull, with an address, which, however, is not found in the original manuscript.

There is some uncertainty as to the year in which these poems were written. Pope himself says that it was when he was sixteen years of age, that is in 1704, and beyond the fact that he systematically ante-dated his compositions in order to obtain credit for precocity, there is nothing improbable in the statement. Walsh, if we were to trust to the published correspondence between him and Wycherley, had seen them before April 20, 1705, but for the authenticity of this letter there is no voucher but Pope's, which is of course worthless by itself. In any case, the correspondence of Lord Lansdown (then Sir George Granville) shows that some of the Pastorals must have been written before the poet was eighteen. "He (Wycherley) shall bring with him, if you will," writes Granville to an unnamed correspondent, "a young poet, newly inspired, in the neighbourhood of Cooper's Hill, whom he and Walsh have taken under their wing. His name is Pope. He is not above seventeen or eighteen years of age, and promises miracles. If he goes on as he has begun in the Pastoral way, as Virgil first tried his strength, we may hope to see English poetry vie with the Roman, and this swan of Windsor sing as

[1] Spence, p. 194.

sweetly as the Mantuan."[1] Jacob Tonson, the publisher, had also seen one of these poems before April 20, 1706, on which day he wrote to Pope: "I have lately seen a pastoral of yours in Mr. Walsh's and Congreve's hands, which is extremely fine, and is generally approved of by the best judges in poetry. I remember I have formerly seen you at my shop, and am sorry I did not improve my acquaintance with you. If you design your poem for the press, no person shall be more careful in printing of it, nor no one can give a greater encouragement to it." Pope accepted this offer; but for one reason or another Tonson's Sixth Miscellany, in which the 'Pastorals' were published, did not appear till May 2, 1709, when Pope, who affected to have been well pleased at the delay, found his poems concluding a volume which was opened by the Pastorals of Ambrose Philips, afterwards the subject of his ironical commendations in the 'Guardian.'

His own 'Pastorals' were received with an outburst of contemporary applause. "It is no flattery at all to say," writes Walsh, who may be supposed to represent the typical opinion of the day, to Wycherley, "that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age." This verdict now provokes only a smile. Poetically considered, the 'Pastorals' have long ceased to excite admiration or even interest: historically, however, they are of value as a landmark in Pope's poetical progress, showing how slowly he arrived at the true meaning of the word 'Nature' on which he afterwards laid so much emphasis, and how completely, at this period, he was mastered by the forms of those models whose spirit he in time learned to embody in his own writings with such conspicuous success. In the volume of his Poems published in 1717 he prefixed to the 'Pastorals' a 'Discourse' explaining the idea which he had formed of this species of poetry, and of the manner in which it should be treated:—

"The original of poetry," says he, "is ascribed to that age which succeeded the creation of the world: and as the keeping of flocks

[1] Works of Lord Lansdown, vol. ii., p. 113.

seems to have been the first employment of mankind, the most ancient sort of poetry was probably pastoral. It is natural to imagine, that the leisure of those ancient shepherds admitting and inviting some diversion, none was so proper to that solitary and sedentary life as singing; and that in their songs they took occasion to celebrate their own felicity. From hence a poem was invented, and afterwards improved to a perfect image of that happy time; which, by giving us an esteem for the virtues of a former age, might recommend them to the present. And since the life of shepherds was attended with more tranquillity than any other rural employment, the poets chose to introduce their persons, from whom it received the name of pastoral."

To which he afterwards adds:—

"If we would copy nature, it may be useful to take this idea along with us, that pastoral is an image of what they call the Golden Age."

Had Pope been more fully acquainted with the history of literature, he would have seen that Pastoral, far from being one of the natural divisions of poetry, like the epic, the drama, the lyric, and the satire, was merely the product of a conventional literary tradition; and that, instead of taking its origin, as he supposed, in the Golden Age, it had always made its appearance in the late stages of artificial social civilisation, and to relieve the *ennui* of courtly circles. Two circumstances have chiefly contributed to the popularity of pastoralism as a species of composition: one, the exquisite grace and beauty of the forms invented by Theocritus, which furnished later poets with a poetical dress for religious, political, and complimentary matter quite alien from the life of shepherds; the other, the inevitable longing for simplicity, naturally associated with the idea of the country, which arises in every artificial state of society. The first circumstance explains the allegorical uses to which the Eclogue has been put by poets like Virgil, Mantuan, Ronsard, and Spenser: the second accounts for the appearance, in the fulness of the classical Renaissance, of works like Sannazaro's prose romance 'Arcadia,' the 'Aminta' of Tasso, the 'Pastor Fido' of Guarini, the 'Faithful Shepherdess' of Fletcher—all obviously founded upon those hints of Arcadia and the Golden Age dropped in the Eclogues of Virgil—and for the spirit

which, in the eighteenth century, animated the Savoyard Vicar of Rousseau, and survived, even in the present century, in 'La Mare au Diable' and other similar tales of George Sand.

But with this feeling, in itself largely artificial and literary, neither Pope nor the French critics, from whom he mainly derived his ideas of pastoral poetry, had any sympathy. The latter, the spokesmen of a nation following the lead of an absolute monarch bent upon the pursuit of glory, as Pope was of a nation occupied with the advancement of political liberty, were not impressed with the sentimental meaning of Pastoralism. To the French aristocracy, who had deserted their old country homes for the gay life of the Court, it was a species of polite masquerade, convenient for a *fête* at Le Trianon and becoming in a picture of Watteau; to Pope it was an established form of classical composition, and duly analysed as such by the French critics, whose judgment he respected. Fontenelle, in his 'Discourse on Pastoralism,' had speculated on its origin, discussed the particular feelings to which it appeals, censured Theocritus' conception of it as being too gross, and Virgil's as being often too lofty, and determined the just mean of sentiment and language which the pastoral poet ought to observe:—

"Ainsi nous avons trouvé à peu-près la mesure d'esprit que peuvent avoir des Bergers, et la langue qu'ils peuvent parler. Il en va, ce me semble, des Eglogues, comme des habits que l'on prend dans des Balets pour representer des Paysans. Ils sont d'étofes beaucoup plus belles que ceux des Païsans véritables, ils sont même ornés de rubans et de points, et on les taille seulement en habits de Païsans. Il faut aussi que les sentimens dont on fait la matière des Eglogues soient plus fins et plus délicats que ceux des vrais Bergers, mais il faut leur donner la forme la plus simple et la plus champestre qu'il soit possible."[1]

If Pope did not actually go so far as to prescribe the exact measure of 'wit' proper to the ideal shepherd, he was equally misled by a false idea of 'correctness' to lay down the rules for pastoral poetry. He imitated the external features of his classical originals without understanding their spirit. His

[1] Fontenelle, 'Traité sur la Nature de l'Eglogue.'

treatment of his subject is of the most conventional character, and consists in a bodily transfer of pagan mythology into English verse. All the operations of Nature are made to depend, as in Virgil and other classical poets, on the humours of the Delias and Sylvias celebrated by the shepherds: the Loves, the Graces, the winds, the woods, and the waves lament as loudly for the loss of Mrs. Tempest in the fourth 'Pastoral,' as they did for the death of Adonis in the Idyll of Bion. Pope, indeed, adds mediæval extravagance to the conceits of his Latin and Greek masters, making a stream, for instance, pause in its flow to listen to the song of a poet, or to 'swell with new passion and o'erflow with tears' for grief at the death of a shepherdess. He claims in one place to have surpassed Spenser in what he calls *judgment*, because he avoids the latter's error of representing wolves in England; but he has no hesitation in making roses, crocuses, and violets all bloom in the same month; in coupling the names of Garth and Phœbus; or in promising that many a lamb shall bleed for that bright goddess, the late Mrs. Tempest, in the neighbourhood of Windsor Forest.

But while thus insensible to the true feeling for Nature which had inspired Theocritus, there was one poetical element in the pastoral, as it was originally treated by its Greek inventor, on which Pope fastened with the instinct of real genius. Theocritus, while refining his verse of all coarse rusticity, yet preserved the musical character which the actual contests between the Sicilian shepherds probably suggested to him; and some of his most beautiful idylls are those containing a refrain like

ἄρχετε βωκολικᾶς, Μοῖσαι φίλαι, ἄρχετ ἀοιδᾶς.

Virgil, who seems to have been chiefly impressed by the external beauties of his predecessor's work, imitated him in the Latin—

"Incipe Mœnalios mecum, mea tibia, versus,"

and

"Desine Mœnalios, jam desine, tibia, versus;'

and Pope, also occupied with his design of harmonising his native language, sought to repeat the same effects in the English. The 'Pastorals' are therefore to be regarded as primarily experiments in versification. Pope's imitation of the ideas of the ancients ended in the merest mechanism, but his imitation of their melody led him to something of real invention. His imagination was moved, not by the 'painted mistress or the purling stream,' of which he afterwards spoke with just contempt, but by the metrical pauses, the variety of accent, and the delicacies of alliteration, for which the traditional treatment of the Pastoral afforded opportunities. The ear of his contemporaries and of his immediate successors was at once caught with the sweetness of his numbers. Johnson declared that the harmony of the 'Pastorals' "had no precedent, nor has since had an imitation;" and indeed, however ridiculous the Damons and Delias of Queen Anne's reign may now appear, he must be an insensible reader who can listen without pleasure to the music of which the Pastoral called 'Autumn,' by far the most beautiful of the series, affords many such instances as the following:—

"Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away!
To Delia's ears the tender notes convey.
As some sad turtle his lost love deplores,
And with deep murmurs fills the sounding shores;
Thus far from Delia to the winds I mourn,
Alike unheard, unpitied, and forlorn.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs along!
For her the feathered quires neglect their song:
For her the limes their pleasing shades deny,
For her the lilies hang their heads and die.
Ye flowers, that droop forsaken by the spring,
Ye birds that, left by summer, cease to sing,
Ye trees that fade when autumn heats remove,
Say, is not absence death to those that love?

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs away!
Cursed be the fields that cause my Delia's stay;
Fade every blossom, wither every tree,
Die every flower, and perish all but she.

What have I said? Where'er my Delia flies,
Let spring attend, and sudden flowers arise;
Let opening roses knotted oaks adorn,
And liquid amber drop from every thorn.

Go, gentle gales, and bear my sighs along!
The birds shall cease to tune their evening song,
The winds to breathe, the waving woods to move,
And streams to murmur, ere I cease to love.
Not bubbling fountains to the thirsty swain,
Not balmy sweets to lab'rers faint with pain,
Not showers to larks, not sunshine to the bee,
Are half so charming as thy sight to me."

About the same period that he wrote the 'Pastorals,' he composed, according to his own account, the purely descriptive portions of 'Windsor Forest,' so far as ver. 290. The poem was not published till 1713, after the concluding lines on the Peace of Utrecht had been added at the suggestion of Lord Lansdown, and Pope, it may be supposed, did much in the interval to polish the original draft, which cannot therefore be accepted so confidently as the 'Pastorals' as the work of his boyhood. Yet it substantially belongs to his 'Pastoral' period; it is, therefore, apart from its poetical merit, of particular interest, as being the first example of his work exhibiting real judgment and invention in the treatment of poetical matter. "The design," says Johnson justly, "is evidently derived from 'Cooper's Hill,' with some attention to Waller's poem on the Park; but Pope cannot be denied to excel his masters in variety and elegance, and in the art of interchanging description, narrative, and morality." Much of the superficial classicism of the 'Pastorals' is here reproduced, notably in the episode of Pan and Lodona, a metamorphosis which might have passed in the fanciful mythologies of Browne, but which produces a discord in the semi-didactic style of 'Windsor Forest.' The figure of Old Father Thames, bowing to Queen Anne, like a Mayor presenting an address, would have betrayed its absurdity to any author whose judgment had not been blinded by a prejudice in favour of classical conventionality. On the other hand, in the descriptions of shooting and

fishing, and in the enumeration of the rivers, rural images are charmingly introduced into the traditional literary style, and in spite of one or two unhappy conceits, the allusions to the poets who have drawn their inspiration from the Thames are very pleasing. Some of the reflective passages foreshadow the later manner of the 'Moral Essays,' and in the opening address to Sir William Trumbull we have the first specimen of that delicate complimentary style which Pope brought to perfection in the 'Imitations of Horace,' and in which he probably excels all poets ancient and modern.

The third example of Pope's pastoral composition is 'The Messiah,' a poem written in 1712, and published in the 'Spectator' of May 14th in the same year. In 'Windsor Forest' he had made a distinct attempt to apply the style he had acquired from the translation of the classics to a modern subject requiring original thought: he now reverted to his earlier practice. The 'Messiah' is even more purely imitative than the 'Pastorals,' and indicates, in the most striking manner, the hold which the forms of Latin poetry had taken upon his imagination.

"In reading several passages of the prophet Isaiah," says the poet, "which foretell the coming of Christ, and the felicities attending it, I could not but observe a remarkable parity between many of the thoughts, and those in the 'Pollio' of Virgil. This will not seem surprising, when we reflect that the Eclogue was taken from a Sibylline prophecy on the same subject. One may judge that Virgil did not copy it line by line, but selected such ideas as best agreed with the nature of pastoral poetry, and disposed them in that manner which seemed most to beautify his piece. I have endeavoured the same in this imitation of him, though without admitting anything of my own; since it was written with this particular view, that the reader, by comparing the several thoughts, might see how far the images and descriptions of the prophet are superior to those of the poet." [1]

He seems not to have reflected that it did not require an imitation of the 'Pollio' to show that Isaiah was more sublime than Virgil, since the superiority of the former is manifest merely from the citation of the parallel passages collected.

[1] Advertisement to 'The Messiah.'

The real question Pope had to determine was whether, *using* the imagery provided for him by the Scriptures, he could *imitate* the form of the 'Pollio,' without doing an injury to the language of the prophet. This question, his judgment should have told him, must be necessarily answered in the negative. Pope was endeavouring in his imitation to blend two irreconcilable styles. The grandeur of Isaiah's diction arises partly from enthusiasm, for in his prophecy there is no element of fiction, partly from the direct simplicity of the particular images, by means of which he paints the glories of the Messianic age. Virgil, on the other hand, had probably no very earnest faith in the fulfilment of the Sibyl's predictions, which he employed merely as the groundwork of poetical rhetoric. The genius of Latin verse lies less in the vividness of single words, than in the just appropriation of adjectives and verbs to substantives, so that where the Bible impresses the imagination at once by the simple names of things, Pope, in order to reproduce the stately oratorical effects of Virgil, has to resort to periphrasis. Thus Isaiah says:

"The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation where dragons lay shall be grass with reeds and rushes. . . . Instead of the thorns shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree. . . . I will set in the desert the fir-tree and the pine and the box-tree together. . . . The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child put his hand on the den of the cockatrice."

In the English text, it will be observed, there are very few words derived directly from the Latin. Pope's paraphrase is as follows:

"The swain in barren deserts with surprise
Sees lilies spring and sudden verdure rise,
And starts amid the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murm'ring in his ear.
On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
The green reed trembles and the bulrush nods.

Waste sandy valleys, once perplexed with thorn,
The spiry fir and shapely box adorn;
To leafless shrubs the flow'ring palms succeed,
And od'rous myrtle to the noisome weed.
The lambs with wolves shall graze the verdant mead,
And boys in flow'ry bands the tiger lead;
The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,
And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim's feet.
The smiling infant in his hand shall take
The crested basilisk and speckled snake,
Pleased the green lustre of the scales survey,
And with their forky tongue shall innocently play."

There is a necessary antagonism between Pagan and Christian ideas. Milton had, however, with admirable art, made use of classical forms, in his invocation to the 'Heavenly Muse' at the opening of 'Paradise Lost,' and Pope might, with a little care, have avoided any obvious incongruity. But at this period of his life he had not reached that spirit of independence which he afterwards acquired, and he was still (though the 'Essay on Criticism' showed him to be on the path to freedom) in bondage to the ancients. In the very first words of his 'Messiah,' "Ye *nymphs* of Solyma," he makes use of a phrase improper to his subject, while he is afterwards seduced by an expression in another Eclogue of Virgil to import an image of absolute polytheism:

"Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers;
Prepare the way! *a* God, *a* God appears.
A God, a God! the vocal hills reply,
The rocks proclaim the approaching deity."[1]

The ingenuity displayed in this application is a measure of the merit of Pope's poem. It is an admirable *tour de force*, and should be regarded like his 'Pastorals' as an exercise in diction and versification. Though, by the conditions under which he had bound himself, he was forced to lower the grandeur of the Scripture language, the art-

[1] Ipsi lætitiâ voces ad sidera jactant
Intonsi montes, ipsæ jam carmina rupes,
Ipsa sonant arbusta, Deus, Deus ille, Menalca!
VIRG., Eclogue v., 62.

fulness with which he adapts his imagery to the Virgilian manner, and combines scattered passages of prophecy in a volume of stately and sonorous verse, is deserving of high admiration; and the concluding lines ascend to a height not unworthy of the original they paraphrase:

"See heav'n its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day.
No more the rising sun shall gild the morn,
Nor ev'ning Cynthia fill her silver horn;
But lost, dissolved, in thy superior rays,
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze
O'erflow thy courts: the Light himself shall shine
Revealed, and God's eternal day be thine!
The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fixed his word, his saving power remains,
Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own Messiah reigns."

CHAPTER III.

'ESSAY ON CRITICISM.'

Opposite Judgments on the Poem—Imitation of Nature—Origin of False Wit—Authority of the Classics.

1711.

HITHERTO Pope had not advanced beyond a purely conventional circle of ideas. His imitative compositions consist, as we have seen, partly of translations, partly of poems professedly original, but which aim at little beyond reproducing the external manner of the classical writers, and which exhibit all those defects of judgment ridiculed by Erasmus in his 'Ciceronianus.' Like Bembo and his followers, Pope was at first overpowered by models of unrivalled literary excellence, and, in his desire to copy them exactly, failed to understand the life and spirit which constituted the propriety of the original style. His industry, however, brought its reward, for, by constantly seeking English equivalents for Latin idioms, he found out many subtle secrets of harmony in his mother tongue, so that afterwards, when he formed really original conceptions, he had no difficulty in clothing them in musical language. We come now to a poem in which he is seen to be formally defining for himself the real meaning of 'correctness' in poetry, and to be reasoning on the relation between the spirit of classical antiquity and the circumstances of his own age.

Pope himself gives two different dates for the composition of the 'Essay on Criticism.' On the title-page of the poem, when it was published in the volume of 1717, he

announced that it was written in the year 1709, and he repeated the statement in every fresh edition of his works up to 1743; when Warburton observed, in the last sentence of his Commentary, that the Essay was 'the work of an author who had not yet attained the twentieth year of his age.' In explanation of the discrepancy Richardson says: "Mr. Pope told me himself that the 'Essay on Criticism' was indeed written in 1707, though said 1709 by mistake."[1] To Spence the poet made contradictory statements on the subject. "My 'Essay on Criticism,'" said he on one occasion, "was written in 1709, and published in 1711, which is as little time as ever I let anything of mine lie by me."[2] But at another time he told him: "I showed Walsh my 'Essay on Criticism' in 1706" (meaning evidently 1707). "He died the year after."[3] Walsh died on March 15, 1708, and the fact is recorded by Pope in a note to the Letters between himself and Walsh published in the year 1735. With studied ambiguity the date of the composition of the Essay is variously stated in different copies of this edition. In some the note runs: "Mr. Walsh died at 49 years old in the year 1708. The year after Mr. Pope writ the 'Essay on Criticism.'" In others: "Mr. Walsh died in 1708, the year after Mr. Pope writ the 'Essay on Criticism.'"

This is a curious illustration of Lady Bolingbroke's remark that Pope loved to play the politician over cabbages and turnips. In 1735, being anxious to obtain a reputation for precocity, he ante-dated the composition of the Essay; but he left a line of retreat open to himself in case of need, by adopting, in the professedly spurious edition of his Correspondence, the variety of punctuation above described.

"The things that I have written fastest," said Pope to Spence, "have always pleased the most. I wrote the 'Essay on Criticism' fast; for I had digested all the matter in prose before I began upon it in verse."[4] It would appear, however,

[1] MS. Note by Richardson in the Quarto of 1717.

[2] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 128.

[3] Spence, 'Anecdotes,' p. 147.

[4] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 142

that this poem was far from obtaining speedy popularity. It was published anonymously on May 15, 1711, and Lewis, the Catholic bookseller, said Warton that "it lay many days in his shop unnoticed and unread." Pope afterwards declared that he had not expected the sale to be quick, as "not one gentleman in sixty, even of liberal education, could understand it." Piqued, however, by neglect, and his appetite for praise having been whetted by the success of his 'Pastorals,' he ordered copies to be sent to several noblemen of taste, among others to Lord Lansdown and to the Duke of Buckingham. Curiosity about the poem was thus aroused, and when the authorship became known and a laudatory notice appeared in the 'Spectator,' the demand for it increased; nevertheless a year passed before the first edition, consisting of one thousand copies, was exhausted.

Long before the sale began to move, however, the 'Essay' had attracted one reader who proceeded promptly to give the world his opinion of its merits. John Dennis was at this time fifty-four years old. He had been educated at Cambridge, where he had acquired considerable learning, which had obtained for him the acquaintance of Dryden, Wycherley, and Congreve. A vigorous prose writer, he was unsuccessful as a poet and a dramatist, and he was extremely poor. He was well known for the violence of his Whiggism, his hatred of the French, and many habits of eccentric irritability; but his opinion on literary questions was listened to with interest, and with some respect, in the clubs and coffee-houses which he frequented.

It is probable that he had pronounced an unfavourable judgment on Pope's 'Pastorals,' for the latter, in his 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' speaking of his early poems, says: 'Yet then did Dennis rave with furious fret.' This offence was remembered and punished by a passage in the 'Essay on Criticism,' in which the poet gave the first mature example of his powers of personal satire. Speaking of the necessity of independence in criticism he says:

"'Twere well might critics still this freedom take,
But Appius reddens at each word you speak,
And stares tremendous with a threatening eye,
Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry."

In these lines there were three sharp strokes. The first was in the name 'Appius,' an allusion to an unlucky Tragedy by Dennis, called 'Appius and Virginia,' which had been acted and condemned in 1709. It is said it was for this play that Dennis invented the new system of stage thunder, the appropriation of which by some other dramatist caused him the lively emotion described in the well-known anecdote recorded in the notes to the 'Dunciad.'[1] Still harder to bear was the accuracy of the description, which, like all Pope's best satire, is not only particular but typical, and raises an admirable image of an angry critic. Lastly, there was special point in the use of the word 'tremendous,' which, besides being exactly appropriate to the ideal description, was a favourite epithet with Dennis. "If," says Gildon, speaking of another unsuccessful play by the former, "there is anything of tragedy in the piece, it lies in the word 'tremendous,' for he is so fond of it he had rather use it in every page than slay his beloved Iphigenia."

Smarting under these sarcasms, Dennis hastened to crush his presumptuous foe, in a pamphlet, published on June 20, 1711, of thirty-two pages of small print (with a preface of five pages more), entitled 'Reflections, Critical and Satyrical, upon a late Rhapsody called an Essay upon Criticism.' It was printed by Lintot, who, says Pope in a letter to Cromwell of June 25, 1711, "favoured me with a sight of Mr. Dennis's piece of fine satire before it was published." In it Dennis complains that he had been "attacked in a clandestine manner in his person instead of his writings." The complaint was groundless, for there was no real concealment of the authorship of the 'Essay,' nor could the satire which reflected on the critic's

[1] 'Dunciad,' ii. 226, and note.

inability to keep his temper, be fairly said to be directed against his person. In any case Dennis's method of retaliation was monstrous and out of all proportion to the nature of the attack. In one passage he speaks of Pope as 'a hunch-backed toad.' In another he says: "If you have a mind to inquire between Sunninghill and Oakingham for a young, short, squab gentleman, an eternal writer of amorous pastoral madrigals, and the very bow of the god of Love, you will be soon directed to him. And pray, as soon as you have taken a survey of him, tell me whether he is a proper author to make personal reflections upon others. This little author may extol the ancients as much and as long as he pleases, but he has reason to thank the good gods that he was born a modern, for had he been born of Grecian parents, and his father had by consequence by law the absolute disposal of him, his life had been no longer than that of one of his poems—the life of half a day." As to Pope's moral character, Dennis describes him as "a little affected hypocrite, who had nothing in his mouth at the same time but truth, candour, good nature, humanity, and magnanimity." It was not likely that insults of this kind would be readily forgotten by a man of Pope's temper: the remembrance of them was stored up for retaliation as soon as the opportunity offered; and thus from a succession of mutual injuries grew what was perhaps the bitterest, and certainly the longest, quarrel in Pope's literary life.

In point of critical matter the pamphlet is by no means the most forcible of Dennis's attacks upon Pope. No attempt is made in it to examine the 'Essay' by any regular method of criticism. A general charge of subservience to the ancients is brought against the author; but the bulk of the 'Reflections' consist of censures of particular passages, which, in respect both of thought and language, are often twisted from their plain meaning. The envy and malignity of the critic betray themselves, not only by the violence of his invective, but by the bitterness with which, in conclusion, he declaims

against the taste of the age, as illustrated by the favour with which the upstart author had recently been received in the clubs and coffee-houses.

Pope's resentment was naturally strong, but he was always too severe a critic of his own work not to profit by the attacks even of an enemy, where they were founded in truth. On June 25th, 1711, he sent Dennis's remarks to his friend Caryll, professing his indifference to their general tenor, but allowing their occasional justice. "To give this man his due," says he, "he has objected to one or two lines with reason, and I will alter them in case of another edition. I will make my enemy do me a kindness where he meant an injury, and so serve instead of a friend. What he observes at the bottom of page 20 of his 'Reflections' was objected to by yourself at Ladyholt, and had been mended but for the haste of the press. It is right Hibernian, and I confess it what the English call a bull in the expression, though the sense be manifest enough." He alludes to a passage in the first edition—

> "What is this wit which must our cares employ?
> The owner's wife that other men enjoy;
> The more his trouble as the more admired,
> Where wanted, scorned, and envied when acquired."

On which Dennis remarked: "How can wit be scorned where it is not? The person who wants this wit may indeed be scorned, but such a contempt declares the honour that the contemner has for wit." Pope altered the last couplet, in consequence of this criticism, to its present form:

> "Then most our trouble still when most admired,
> And still the more we give, the more required."

Again, in the first edition there was a couplet—

> "Be silent always when you doubt your sense;
> Speak when you're sure, yet speak with diffidence."

On which Dennis observed that a man who was sure should

speak with 'a modest assurance.' Pope noted on the margin of his MS., "Dennis, p. 21. Alter the inconsistency." He did so, and the second line stands at present—

"And speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence."

He was soon consoled for Dennis's attacks by the approval of the highest critical authority of the time. Among those to whom he had no doubt sent a copy of the Essay was Steele, with whom he had already some acquaintance, and on December 20th a notice of the poem appeared in the 'Spectator':

"In our own country," said the writer, "a man seldom sets up for a poet without attacking the reputation of all his brothers in the art. The ignorance of the moderns, the scribblers of the age, the decay of poetry, are the topics of detraction with which he makes his entrance into the world. I am sorry to find that an author who is very justly esteemed among the best judges, has admitted some strokes of this nature into a very fine poem—I mean the 'Art of Criticism,' which was published some months since, and is a masterpiece of its kind. The observations follow one another like those in Horace's 'Art of Poetry,' without that methodical regularity which would have been requisite in a prose author. They are, some of them, uncommon, but such as the reader must assent to, when he sees them explained with that elegance and perspicuity in which they are delivered. As for those which are the most known, and the most received, they are placed in so beautiful a light, and illustrated with such apt allusions, that they have in them all the graces of novelty, and make the reader who was before acquainted with them, still more convinced of their truth and solidity."

Pope was of course exceedingly pleased. He assumed that Steele was the author of the paper, and wrote to him, gratefully acknowledging the generosity of the praise, which he said he was inclined to ascribe to Steele's personal good will towards him, and he professed at the same time his willingness to omit the ill-natured strokes in another edition. Steele replied: "I have received your very kind letter. That part of it which is grounded upon your belief that I have much affection and friendship for you, I receive with great pleasure. That which acknowledges the honour done to your Essay, I

have no pretence to. The paper was written by one with whom I will make you acquainted, which is the best return I can make to you for your favour to, sir, your most obliged humble servant."[1] Such was the origin of the acquaintance between Pope and Addison.

Opinion on the merits of the 'Essay on Criticism' has divided itself curiously according to the lines taken respectively by Addison and Dennis. Throughout the eighteenth and the early part of the present century the verdict of the former was repeated in various tones of emphasis. "The 'Essay on Criticism,'" says Johnson, "is one of Pope's greatest works, and if he had written nothing else, would have placed him among the first critics and the first poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition—selection of matter, novelty of arrangement, justness of precept, splendour of illustration, and propriety of digression. I know not whether it be pleasing to consider that he produced this piece at twenty, and never afterwards excelled it."[2] Warton endorsed Johnson's opinion on one point, but, in conformity with the theory of Poetry maintained through his 'Essay on the Genius of Pope,' questioned it on another. "The 'Essay on Criticism,'" says he, "is a poem of that species for which our author's genius was particularly turned—the didactic and moral. It is therefore, as might be expected, a masterpiece in its kind. . . . . When we consider the just taste, the strong sense, the knowledge of men, books, and opinions, that are so predominant in the 'Essay on Criticism,' we must readily agree to place the author among the first critics, though not, as Dr. Johnson says, 'among the first poets,' on that account alone."[3] Bowles is one degree cooler. "Most of the observations in this Essay are just, and certainly evince good sense, an extent of reading, and powers of comparison, considering the age of the author, extraordinary.

[1] Letter from Steele to Pope, of January 20, 1711–12.

[2] Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets:' 'Pope.'

[3] Warton's edition of Pope's Works —Life, p. xvi.

Johnson's praise, however, is exaggerated."[1] Finally the chorus of praise is completed by Hallam, who says: "'The Rape of the Lock' is a double-refined essence of wit and fancy, as the 'Essay on Criticism' is of wit and sense. The quantity of thought and observation in this work for so young a man as Pope was when he wrote it is wonderful: unless we adopt the supposition that most men of genius spend the rest of their lives in teaching others what they themselves have learned under twenty."[2]

The tide begins to turn in the direction of disparagement with De Quincey. The 'Essay on Criticism' he pronounces to be "the feeblest and least interesting of Pope's writings, being substantially a mere versification, like a metrical multiplication table, of common-places the most mouldy with which criticism has baited its rat-traps. The maxims, of no natural order or logical dependency, are generally so vague as to mean nothing, and, what is remarkable, many of the rules are violated by no man as often as by Pope, and by Pope nowhere so often as in this very poem."[3] The whole of De Quincey's Essay on Pope is vitiated by a tone of superiority which the proportion between their respective intellects by no means justifies. His opinion is, however, substantially approved, though with a wide difference in taste and expression, by Mr. Leslie Stephen, whose judgment, since it doubtless represents the views of many learned and accomplished men in our own day, I here reproduce at length:

"The maxims on which Pope chiefly dwells are for the most part the obvious rules which have been the common property of all generations of critics. One would scarcely ask for originality in such a case, any more than one would desire a writer on ethics to invent new laws of morality. We require neither Pope nor Aristotle to tell us that critics should not be pert nor prejudiced; that fancy should be regulated by judgment; that apparent facility comes by long training; that the sound should have some conformity to the meaning; that genius is

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[1] Bowles, edition of Pope's Works, vol. i., p. 198, note to v. 25.

[2] Lectures on the English Poets (3rd Edition), p. 142.

[3] De Quincey's works (1862), vol vii., p. 64.

often envied; and that dulness is frequently beyond the reach of reproof. We might even guess, without the authority of Pope backed by Bacon, that there are some beauties which cannot be taught by method, but must be reached by 'a kind of felicity.' It is not the less interesting to notice Pope's skill in polishing these rather rusty sayings into the appearance of novelty. In a familiar line Pope gives us the view which he would himself apply in such cases—

> 'True wit is nature to advantage dressed,
> What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.'

The only fair question, in short, is whether Pope has managed to give a lasting form to some of the floating commonplaces which have more or less suggested themselves to every writer. If we apply this test, we must admit that if the 'Essay upon Criticism' does not show deep thought, it shows singular skill in putting old truths. Pope undeniably succeeded in hitting off many phrases of marked felicity. He already showed the power in which he was probably unequalled of coining aphorisms out of commonplace." [1]

It will be observed that the critical sense of the Essay is most warmly appreciated by those who are nearest to it in point of time, and is coldly spoken of in proportion as the practical value of its maxims becomes less apparent. It is further seen that those who praise it for its matter do not claim for it much novelty, and those who depreciate it, for its lack of novelty in matter, yet speak highly of the beauty of its form. The question between the two sets of critics, therefore, narrows itself to a very definite issue. Is Mr. Stephen right in making its sole excellence consist in the 'coining of aphorisms out of commonplace,' or Addison, in saying that its observations 'are placed in so beautiful a light, and illustrated with such apt allusions, that they have in them all the graces of novelty, and make the reader who was before acquainted with them, still more convinced of their truth and solidity'? For if what is said in the 'Essay' be of the nature of platitude, no amount of skill in the manner of saying it can make it of any value: if, on the other hand, the truths that it conveys are such as, though not doubtful, are not known intuitively, but can only be discovered by experience and reflection; if, indeed, we see them every day openly disregarded by writers of talent

[1] 'Pope' (Men of Letters Series). By Leslie Stephen, p. 23.

and distinction; then these truths are not correctly described as 'commonplace.' It becomes, therefore, of importance to understand fully the poet's design, and the light in which his Essay presented itself to the minds of contemporary readers.

And in the first place, there is a great deal of significance in the title—'An *Essay* on Criticism'; an attempt at *Criticism*, not an Art of Poetry like Boileau's. Up to that moment it may be said that the art of Criticism was not in existence in England. Two opposite streams of opinion divided men's minds, the tradition of Mediævalism, and the tradition of the Renaissance; the former seeking to preserve venerable forms from which the vital spirit had departed, the latter to revive old prescriptions which were unsuited to modern circumstances. Mediævalism is perhaps best represented in England by the very ingenious 'Art of English Poesie,' written in the reign of Elizabeth, and commonly assigned to George Puttenham; while the chief advocate of Classicalism at the end of the seventeenth century was Thomas Rymer, a great enemy of Shakespeare and Milton, and so much a slave of Aristotle, that he wished to restore the Chorus to the English stage. Of criticism in the modern sense of the word the only examples were, in prose, the scattered Prefaces of Dryden, and, in verse, the commonplace Essays of Mulgrave and Roscommon on Satire and the Art of Translation. Nevertheless, in spite of the absence of any settled code of taste, the coffee-houses were filled with wits and critics who pronounced with a loud confidence on the merits of every work newly submitted to the public. The result was a Babel of ignorance, caprice, and contradiction. Young as he was, Pope perceived the necessity of reducing this chaos to order; his 'Essay,' ostensibly merely a collection of maxims for the benefit of critics, is in reality the first attempt to trace for English readers the just boundaries of taste.

Though the 'Essay on Criticism' is far from being the systematic treatise that Warburton pretends, it has more method than Addison in the 'Spectator' seems disposed to

allow it, being indeed a series of loosely connected observations, kept together by the obvious drift of the poet's thought in one direction. Pope observes the prevailing discord of taste:

> "'Tis with our judgments as our watches, none
> Goes just alike, yet each consults his own."

But, in spite of all differences, he perceives that 'each has the seeds of judgment in his mind,' which he therefore holds to be sown there by Nature. Everything in the Essay turns on this fundamental idea of Nature, and three main principles underlie Pope's reasoning: (1) That all sound judgment and true 'wit' is founded on the observation of Nature; (2) That false 'wit' arises from a disregard of Nature and an excessive affection for the conceptions of the mind; (3) That the true standard for determining what is 'natural' in poetry is to be found in the best works of the ancients. I shall consider these principles in turn.

> "(1.) First follow nature, and your judgment frame
> By her just standard, which is still the same.
> Unerring nature, still divinely bright,
> One clear, unchanged, and universal light,
> Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,
> At once the source, and end, and test of art."

Bowles observes, in a note on these lines, that many critics have given the same advice, but that the difficulty is to determine what is 'nature,' and what her 'just standard.' He seems, however, not to have remarked that Pope had in his own mind a clear idea of what he meant by the term 'nature,' and that, consciously or unconsciously, he opposed it to those *metaphysical* ideas of nature which had prevailed since the philosophy of Aristotle was transformed into the philosophy of Aquinas. Pope uses the word in the sense in which Shakespeare uses it in 'Hamlet' when he speaks of "holding the mirror up to nature,"[1] and as Bacon uses it in the first aphorism of the 'Novum Organum': "Man, as the minister

[1] Hamlet, act iii. sc. 2.

and interpreter, does and understands as much as his observations on the order of nature, either with regard to things or the mind, permit him, and neither knows nor is capable of more."

The 'just standard' of nature in poetry which Pope commends to the critic is that direct, imitative action of the imagination characteristic of Homer and the classical poets, as distinguished from the subjective or metaphysical methods introduced by the Provençal poets, and continued by Dante and Petrarch, through a long line of versifiers as late as the latter part of the seventeenth century. Mr. Stephen is surely wrong when he says, by implication, that the maxim, "Follow Nature" has been "common to all generations of critics." According to Aristotle, basing his criticisms on the practice of Homer and the Greek tragedians, poetry was, doubtless, an imitative art; but the conception of poetry by the critics of the middle ages, who derived their general ideas from the schoolmen, was something entirely different, as the following passage will show:—

"To return to where we left off," says Boccaccio in his Life of Dante, "I say that Theology and Poetry may be said to be almost one, where their subject is the same: nay more, I say that Theology is nothing but God's Poetry. For what is it but a kind of poetic invention, when in the Scripture Christ is spoken of at one time as a lion, at another as a lamb; sometimes as a worm, at other times as a dragon, at others as a rock, and in many other ways, to recite all of which would be tedious. What else are the words of the Saviour in the Gospel but a discourse of what is beyond the senses, which manner of speaking we in more ordinary language call *allegory*? It is evident then not only that Poetry is Theology, but also that Theology is Poetry. And even if my words obtain small credence in so great a matter, I shall not disturb myself, but let men trust Aristotle, a most weighty witness in every great matter, who affirms that he finds the poets to have been the first theologians." [1]

It is true that Greek poetry, or the poetic imagination of the Greek race, operating on Nature, was the source of Greek theology, but the mythological conception of Nature thus formed, had nothing in common with the metaphysical

[1] Translated from Boccaccio's 'Vita e Costumi di Dante Alighieri.'

and allegorical methods of thought, common among the poets of mediæval Europe, which are themselves the product of the Christian Revelation interpreted by the schoolmen. To this origin, it need hardly be said, is to be traced the 'Divine Comedy' of Dante, but it is not so generally recognized that the same continuous system of thought, in its ultimate decrepitude, gave rise to what is usually known as the 'Metaphysical' school of English poetry in the seventeenth century.[1] Yet the matter is capable of proof.

(2.) No word occurs oftener in the 'Essay on Criticism,' or with a greater variety of meanings, than 'wit.' Sometimes it signifies pure intellect:

> "One science only will one genius fit:
> So vast is art, so narrow human wit."

Sometimes genius:

> "He who, supreme in judgment as in wit,
> Might boldly censure, as he boldly writ."

Sometimes conceit:

> "Pleased with a work where nothing's just or fit
> One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit."

It is employed twice in a single couplet to signify respectively fancy and judgment:

> "Some to whom heaven in wit has been profuse,
> Want as much more to turn it to its use."

And it is also used as a synonym for ingenious writers:

> "Some have at first for wits, then poets passed,
> Turned critics next, and proved mere fools at last."

Through every variety of meaning, however, there runs a common idea implying the rapid perception of resemblances in

[1] It is worth observing that Johnson, who is generally credited with the invention of this name, borrowed it from Pope. He had seen the MS. of Spence's 'Anecdotes,' in which (p. 173) Pope is reported to have said: "Cowley, as well as Davenant, borrowed his *metaphysical* style from Donne."

nature, and Pope would have had no difficulty in accepting the distinction drawn between wit and judgment by Locke, whose reasoning may indeed be said to pervade every part of the 'Essay.' "Hence, perhaps," says Locke, "may be given some reason of that common observation, 'That men who have a great deal of wit and prompt memories, have not always the clearest judgment or deepest reason.' For wit lying most in the assemblage of ideas, and putting those together with quickness and variety, wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity, thereby to make up pleasant pictures and agreeable visions in the fancy; judgment, on the contrary, is quite on the other side, in separating carefully, one from another, ideas wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude and by affinity to take one thing for another. This is a way of proceeding quite contrary to metaphor and allusion; wherein, for the most part, lies that entertainment and pleasantry of wit, which strikes so lively on the fancy and is therefore so acceptable to all people."[1]

Locke, it is evident, is here describing the manner of the poetry in vogue in his own day. The characteristics of the 'metaphysical' school of poets are well-known, and nothing need be added to the admirable specimens of 'wit' cited by Addison in his famous series of papers in the 'Spectator,'[2] and by Johnson in his Life of Cowley. Neither Johnson nor Addison, however, offers any explanation of the extraordinary outburst of witty or 'metaphysical' writing between the middle of the sixteenth and the middle of the seventeenth centuries, nor, as far as I know, has any attempt been made by any later writer to furnish a scientific account of the phenomenon. Johnson's history of the matter is obviously insufficient. "Wit," says he, "like all other things subject by their nature to the choice of man, has its changes and fashions, and at different times takes different forms. About the beginning of the seventeenth century appeared a race of

[1] 'Essay on the Human Understanding,' chapter xi. 2.

[2] Nos. 58—63.

writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets, of whom in a criticism on the works of Cowley it is not improper to give some account. . . . . This kind of writing, which was, I believe, borrowed from Marino and his followers, had been recommended by the example of Donne, a man of very extensive and various knowledge; and by Jonson, whose manner resembled that of Donne more in the ruggedness of his lines than in the cast of his sentiments." Johnson, therefore, supposes "witty" writing to have been due to the example of Marino, although Donne wrote before Marino had acquired his great reputation; and he represents it as springing up almost capriciously in England about the beginning of the seventeenth century, although writing precisely similar in character prevailed at the same period, and earlier, in every country of Europe that could boast of a literature. How is it, if Johnson is right, that within the century between 1550 and 1650 we find Lyly writing in England:

"There dwelt in Athens a young gentleman of great possessions and of so comely a personage that it was doubted whether he was more bound to Nature for the lineaments of his person, or to Fortune for the increase of his possessions. But Nature, impatient of comparisons, and as it were, disdaining a companion or co-partner in her working, added to this comelynesse of body such a sharpe capacity of mind, that not only she proved Fortune counterfait, but was half of that opinion that she herselfe was only currant"[1]—

Marino writing in Italy:

"But who can paint the two shining and serene stars beneath either brow? Who the beautiful scarlet of his sweet lips, which of living treasures are rich and full? Or what whiteness of ivory, or what of the lily can match his neck, which, like an adamant column, upholds and sustains a heaven of wonders gathered in that fair countenance?"[2]—

Manuel de Faria y Sousa writing in Spain:

"Ten lucid arrows of crystal were darted at me from the eyes of Albania, which produced on my pain an effect like ruby, though the cause was crystalline?"[3]—

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[1] Lyly's 'Euphues.'

[2] Marino, 'Adone,' Canto i., 44.

[3] 'Fuente de Aganippe,' o Rimas Varias de Manuel de Faria y Sousa.

lastly Mlle. de Scudéri writing in France:

"You doubtless remember well, maium, that Herminius had begged Clelia to teach him how to go from *New Friendship* to *Tenderness*: so that he had to begin with this first town which is at the foot of the Map in order to go to the others: for to make you understand better Clelia's design, you will see she has imagined that Tenderness may proceed from three different causes; either from great esteem, or gratitude, or inclination: and hence she was obliged to place those towns of Tenderness on three rivers which bear those names, and to make also three different roads to go to them. Just as one says, Cumæ on the Ionian sea, and Cumæ on the Tyrrhenian sea, so she makes us say, Tenderness on Inclination, Tenderness on Esteem, and Tenderness on Gratitude."[1]

And again, how is it that all these specimens of false 'wit' are to be found within an epoch which may be roughly limited on the one side by the Council of Trent, marking the ebb of Scholasticism, on the other by the abolition of military tenures in England, indicating the disappearance of the Feudal System? Evidently the resemblance between writers dealing with such different subjects, and in so many languages, is not to be explained as if it were the result, as Johnson supposes, of mere accident: it must be the result of the operation of similar forces, religious, social, and political, and of the influence of some wide-spread literary tradition.[2]

It will be observed that the leading feature in all the examples of 'witty' writing cited above is the excessive use of metaphor. Addison goes so far as to maintain that mannerism of this kind is in Greek literature practised only by the epigrammatists.[3] In truth, however, the desire for novelty, and the necessities of poetical diction, made the use of out-of-the-way metaphors by no means infrequent among the Greek tragedians, and it is difficult to see how such expressions as

[1] 'Clelie,' part i., book i.

[2] Hallam ('Literary History,' vol. iii. p. 255), who sees the inadequacy of Johnson's historical explanation, yet adopts his opinion that "witty" writing arose simply out of the desire for novelty. The desire of the poets to be regarded as inventors was doubtless one of the causes of the style, but in itself this mere desire does not explain why, in the midst of so much diversity, there should have been so much similarity of aim.

[3] 'Spectator,' No. 62.

"the sharp-beaked unbarking hounds of Zeus" (meaning griffins),[1] "an arrow-point not forged with fire" (meaning the gad-fly),[2] "an Ares without brazen shield" (used of a plague),[3] or "a fire not of Hephæstus" (the thing referred to being discord),[4] differ from the 'mixed wit' spoken of in the 'Spectator.' These ingenious and enigmatical expressions were, as we know, within certain limits approved by the best critics of the Greeks. Still there can be no doubt that while in the best classical poets metaphor is used deliberately as an ornament of expression,[5] among the poets of the middle ages it almost always involves a refinement of thought; and while the employment of metaphor for its own sake appears in Greek literature only at the last stage, when the greater poetical motives were exhausted, the same characteristic presents itself at the very dawn of modern European poetry, when all the streams of imagination were beginning to spring from new sources.

The explanation of this remarkable phenomenon is to be sought in the ideas of Nature prevailing when the art of poetry began to revive after the fall of the Roman Empire. The Greek poets and orators were but little distracted by philosophic speculation; their modes of expression were imitated directly from nature and their own social institutions; the Greek and Latin critics drew the rules of rhetoric and poetry from their observation of the practice of the orators and poets. But the imagination of those who first began to harmonise the existing languages of Europe was pressed on all sides by the ideas of established philosophies and elder civilisations. Their physical ideas of the universe were drawn from the geography and astronomy of Ptolemy. Their taste, entirely strange to

[1] Æschylus, 'Prometheus,' 803.
[2] Ibid., 880.
[3] Sophocles, 'O. T.,' 190.
[4] Euripides, 'Orestes,' 621.
[5] Cicero explains the use of metaphor somewhat differently from Aristotle: "Tertius ille modus transferendi verbi late patet, quem necessitas genuit inopiâ coacta et angustiis; post autem delectatio jucunditasque celebravit; nam ut vestis frigoris depellendi causâ reperta primo post adhiberi cæpta est ad ornatum etiam corporis et dignitatem, sic verbi translatio instituta est ab inopiæ causâ frequentata delectationis."—De Oratore, lib. iii., cap. 38.

the traditions of Greece and Rome, had been mainly affected by models, which, derived from the Arabs in Spain or imported from the East by the Crusaders, lent themselves readily to the chivalrous fancies engendered by the Feudal System. Above all it must be remembered that the early poets of Europe were surrounded by the atmosphere of the Scholastic Logic. To the subtle and all-pervading influence of this philosophy we owe that poets, writing with a complete freshness of style, in a newly-formed language, and in a state of society in many respects extremely primitive, yet exhibit in their work all those artifices, distinctions, and refinements, which we are accustomed to associate with a literature in its decay. Nowhere is the scholastic spirit more faithfully or vividly reflected than in the 'Tensons' of the Troubadours, and in the casuistry of the Courts of Love. Describing the Tenson, M. Raynouard says:—

"Dans les usages galants de la chevalerie, dans les jeux spirituels des troubadours, on distinguait le talent de soutenir et de défendre des questions délicates et controversées, ordinairement relatives à l'amour; l'ouvrage où les poëtes exerçaient ainsi la finesse et la subtilité de leur esprit, s'appelait *Tenson* du latin *Contensionem, Dispute, Débat;* on lit dans le Comte de Poitiers: Et si vous me proposez un jeu d'amour, je ne suis pas assez sot que de ne pas choisir la meilleure question."[1]

Another fertile source of metaphysical thought and metaphorical expression was Allegory. Neo-Platonism, permeating Christian theology, and blending readily with the figurative language of the Bible, taught the learned world to interpret Nature after the fashion described by Boccaccio in the passage already cited, and allegory in consequence acquired an established place in poetical literature. The Platonic philosophy of Ideas was easily conformable to modes of thought resting on a semi-material conception of the world beyond the grave; hence it is that the *Vision* is so favourite a form with the poets of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, who followed on the path struck out by Plato in his Myths, as in the 'Divine Comedy' of Dante, the 'Romaunt of the Rose,' and the 'Vision of Piers Plowman;'

[1] Raynouard's 'Choix des Troubadours,' vol. ii., p. lxxxiv.

and hence too the numerous abstractions, False Semblance, False Danger, Love, Simplesse, Fraunchise, and the like, which crowd the verse of the period.

Lastly, the use of metaphors and conceits in early European poetry was largely encouraged by the almost exclusive application of these Oriental, Scholastic, Allegorical ideas of Nature to the subject of Love. The necessity of a crowd of competing poets, to exhibit a common theme in novel lights, kept the imagination perpetually on the alert to discover resemblances between the objects of external nature and the spiritual objects which appeared to transcend it. Hence that frequent personification of abstractions which is of course a leading feature in the most beautiful and pathetic specimen of this kind of writing, the 'Vita Nuova' of Dante.[1] Already, also, in the early remains of Provençal poetry, we find that the heart has become a castle, while the eyes of ladies are the enemies of the hearts of men, and inflict upon them delightful wounds and pleasurable pains.[2]

At the meridian of the Scholastic Philosophy and of the Feudal System the forms of poetry produced under them no

[1] The very curious and interesting passage, in which, in the 'Vita Nuova,' Dante defends himself for personifying Love by reference to the practice of the Latin and Greek poets, exactly illustrates what is said above, and shows how completely the philosophical criticism of Aristotle and Quintilian had disappeared from the mediæval world. "The first," says he, "who began to write as a poet in the vulgar tongue was moved thereto by wishing to make his words understood by a lady who could not easily understand Latin verse. And this practice makes against those who take any other subject than that of Love, inasmuch as this mode of writing was used from the first only in speaking of Love. Whence, seeing that greater licence of speaking is granted to poets than to prose-writers, and these writers in rhyme are nothing else than poets in the vulgar tongue, it is just and reasonable that they should have greater licence of speech than others that use that tongue; so that if any figure or rhetorical colouring be allowed to the poets, it should also be allowed to the rhymers. If, then, we see that the poets have spoken of inanimate things as if they had sense, and have made them hold discourse together, and that not only about real things but things not real (for instance, where they make things speak which have no existence, and many things which are accidents speak as if they were substances or men), it is just that the writer of rhymes should be allowed to do the like."

[2] Instances of such conceits are to

doubt reflected the prevalent idea of Nature. Assume, for example, an idea of the universe derived from the Ptolemaic system, the inner significance of numbers, the symbolical interpretation of colours, the influence of the heavenly bodies on earthly things, and the language of the 'Vita Nuova' will appear not merely mystical, but in a high degree natural and pathetic. Few who read the narrative will doubt Dante's real love for Beatrice, though his love, like all other earthly things, had for him a spiritual meaning, and he himself makes Beatrice say:

> "Così parlar conviensi al vostro ingegno,
> Perocchè solo da sensato apprende
> Ciò che fa poscia d'intelletto degno."[1]

But this sincere conviction soon decayed. Even in a poet so immediately connected with the Troubadours as Petrarch, we see the natural tendency of the new poetical taste to gravitate towards artificiality and false wit. The following sonnet, describing the soul mastered by sensual appetite, which seems to have been famous as late as the age of Tasso,[2] foreshadows, in its mechanical metaphor, the final decadence of the style in the hands of Cowley:—

> "Passa la nave mia colma d'obblio
> Per aspro mar a mezza notte il verno
> Infra Scilla e Cariddi; ed al governo
> Siede 'l Signor, anzi 'l nemico mio:
> A ciascun remo un pensier pronto e rio
> Che la tempesta e 'l fin par ch' abbi a scherno:
> La vela rompe un vento umido eterno
> Di sospir, di speranze, e di desio:
> Pioggia di lagrimar, nebbia di sdegni
> Bagna e rallenta le già stanche sarte,
> Che son d'error con ignoranza attorto:
> Celansi i duo miei dolci usati segni:
> Morta fra l'onde è la ragion e l'arte.
> Tal ch' incomincio a disperar del porto."[3]

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be found *passim* in Raynouard's 'Choix des Troubadours.' See especially vol. ii., xxvi.–xxx.

[1] 'To speak in this manner (*i.e.*, allegorically) is suitable to your wit, because from the object of sense alone it apprehends what it afterwards makes worthy of the understanding.' Dante, 'Paradiso,' iv. 40.

[2] Tasso speaks of it in his letter to the Cardinal Scipio Gonzaga of June 15, 1575.

[3] 'Laden with oblivion my ship passes through a rough sea at mid-

By the middle of the sixteenth century the disease of the imagination, the germs of which are here visible, had fully developed itself: by the middle of the seventeenth imagination itself had sunk under its ravages. It is a long step downwards from Laura to the Fair Geraldine, but still more tremendous is the descent from Surrey's mistress to 'The Mistress' of Cowley, whom, in spite of the hundred poems addressed to her, the poet does not hesitate to confess to be a purely mythical being. "So it is," he says, "that poets are scarce thought Freemen of the Company without paying some duties, and obliging themselves to be true to Love!" What would Guido Cavalcanti have said to his late descendant?

The history of the decline and fall of Allegory is equally significant. In the thirteenth century this manner of writing is so common that interpretation of it is not thought necessary. But by the middle of the sixteenth century writers of long narrative poems are generally found to be anxious to explain their inner meaning: they therefore necessarily deceive their readers, and perhaps themselves. Thus, in place of the enigmatic, but in its own way simple and natural, opening of the 'Divine Comedy,' we find Tasso confessing in a letter to a friend that, when he formed the design of his 'Jerusalem Delivered,' he had no thought of Allegory, but that nevertheless the poem may be interpreted in an esoteric sense.[1] Marino has the impudence to pretend that the 'Adone,' the most luxurious and effeminate of poems, has a moral design.[2] In England a long succession of insipid allegorical poems culminated in

night in winter between Scylla and Charybdis, and at the helm sits my Lord, or, rather, my enemy. At each oar is a thought prompt and evil, which appears to laugh to scorn the tempest and the end. A damp, incessant wind of sighs, of hopes, and of desire rends the sail; rain of tears, cloud of wrath, drenches and slackens the now weary shrouds, which are tangled with error and ignorance: hidden are my two sweet customary stars: perished in the waves is art and reason. So that I begin to despair of the port.'—Petrarch, Sonnet 156.

[1] See his letter to Scipio Gonzaga, dated June 15, 1575.

[2] Ombraggia il ver Parnaso e non rivela
Gli atti misteri ai semplici profani,

the heavenly conception of the 'Faery Queen;' but even here the morality of the poet's inward belief betrays itself in Spenser's preface, where, after explaining that his poem is modelled after Ariosto's 'Orlando,' the hero of which he thinks to be intended as 'the model of a good governor and a virtuous man,' he goes on to announce that the great and mighty Gloriana is meant to typify Queen Elizabeth!

Here, then, we have the key alike to the growth and the decomposition of the mediæval style of poetry. The growth is due to a profound and sincere mode of religious belief, and to a prevailing system of manners, from both of which the early poets drew their idea of Nature and the imaginative forms in which they expressed it. The decomposition is due to the adherence of the later poets to the forms thus created, long after the decay of the mode of religious belief, and the transformation of social manners, had deprived them of their old verisimilitude. A multitude of metaphors, conceits, and fantastic refinements, were left high and dry by the ebb of the scholastic philosophy, and these the poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries caught at, and employed them for their own sake. Thus, says Marino, "I have printed certain of my sacred discourses which have been received with considerable applause, not so much on account of their erudition and the purity of their style as of their novelty in point of invention, each of them being always made to turn on a single metaphor."[1] No other result was to be expected from such sonnets as the one by Petrarch I have already cited.

Moreover, by a perfectly intelligible process, as these late poets were moved not by an inward conviction of the imagination, but by the mere desire to say something novel and sur-

Ma con scorza mentita asconde e cela
(Quasi in rozzo silice) celesti arcani.
Però dal vel che tesse or la mia tela
In molti versi favolosi e vani,
Questo senso verace altri raccoglia:
Smoderato piacer termina in doglia.

[1] Marino, Lettere No. 8. Al San Vitale.

prising, so, in proportion to the inanity of their subject-matter, is found to be the violence of their metaphors. In England, to take one example out of a thousand, Cartwright, a Royalist poet, selects for a subject King Charles I.'s recovery from small-pox in 1633, and finds his Majesty's disease to be of a celestial nature:

> "Let then the name be altered, let us say
> They were small stars fixed in a Milky Way;
> Or faithful turquoises which Heaven sent
> For a discovery, not a punishment;
> To show the ill, not make it; and to tell
> By their pale looks the bearer was not well." [1]

This, perhaps, may be paralleled by Dryden's juvenile lines, written still later in the century, on the death of Lord Hastings, in which he compares the marks of small-pox to jewels and rose-buds!

There was yet another cause for the corruption of taste in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the same time that the departing spirit of mediævalism left behind it a vast inheritance of forms which had ceased to have any real significance, the reviving spirit of classicalism brought along with it a store of images belonging to the religion of the extinct Pagan world, the meaning of which was but ill comprehended by modern society. The two streams joined; hence that strange compound of Christian dogma and Pagan mythology which prevails in the Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Caroline poets, and of which, perhaps, the most remarkable examples are to be found in the 'Faery Queen.'

These considerations may serve to elucidate what is not immediately obvious to the modern reader, the relation between the words 'Wit' and 'Nature,' which Pope couples in his famous definition:

> "True wit is nature to advantage dressed,
> What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed."

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[1] Chalmers' 'English Poets,' vol. vi. p. 515—Poems of William Cartwright.

He duly enumerates in his Essay the various 'idols' of taste in poetical thought and diction, which had sprung out of the decay of mediævalism and the revival of paganism:

> "Some to conceit alone their taste confine,
> And glittering thoughts struck out at every line."

This was the aim of the school of Donne and Cowley in England; of the Marinists in Italy; and of the Conceptualists in Spain:

> "Others for language all their care express,
> And value books, as women men, for dress."

Such were the Pleiad in France; the Euphuists of England; and the Spanish disciples of Gongora, the inventor of the *estilo culto*:

> "But most by numbers judge a poet's song,
> And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong."

He seems in this division of the 'Essay' to be referring to those Court poets so numerous in the seventeenth century—'the mob of gentlemen who write with ease'—who gave all their attention to the music of poetry without regarding its sense and subject-matter. Waller himself, in his verses to Sacharissa and similar poems, would have fallen under Pope's censure, who noted the difference between his 'smoothness' and the 'varying verse and *full* resounding line' which Dryden, the first real master of his own school, introduced into English poetry. Elsewhere, too, he has exemplified the taste of his 'tuneful fools,' as he calls them, in his 'Song by a Person of Quality.' All these false conceptions of art spring, he says, out of false conceptions of nature:

> "Thus critics of less judgment than caprice,
> Curious not knowing, not exact but nice,
> Form short ideas; and offend in arts,
> As most in manners, by a love to parts."

What he himself insists on in his Essay is the necessity of

founding all metrical composition on a sound *general* idea of nature. His meaning is well illustrated by his remarks on Crashaw, a typical poet of the Metaphysical School:—

"I take this poet," he says, "to have writ like a gentleman, that is, at leisure hours, and more to keep out of idleness than to establish a reputation, so that nothing regular or just can be expected from him. All that regards design, form, fable, which is the soul of poetry, all that concerns exactness, or consent of parts, which is the body, will probably be wanting. Only pretty conceptions, fine metaphors, glittering expressions, and something of a neat cast of verse, which are properly the dress, gems, or loose ornaments of poetry, may be found in these verses. . . . His thoughts, one may observe in the main, are pretty; but sometimes far-fetched and too often strained and stiffened to make them appear the greater. For men are never so apt to think a thing great, as when it is odd or wonderful; and inconsiderate authors would rather be admired than understood."[1]

As to just taste in art and poetry, "People seek," he writes to Walsh, "for what they call wit on all subjects, and in all places; not considering that Nature loves truth so well that it hardly ever admits of flourishing. Conceit is to nature what paint is to beauty; it is not only needless but impairs what it would improve."[2] Hence the various maxims in the Essay directed against the different forms of false wit; *e.g.*, the definition of true wit (already cited) aimed at the lovers of novel conceits, with the couplet that follows it:—

> "Something, whose truth convinced at sight we find,
> That gives us back the image of our mind—"

the censure on the style of the Euphuists, implied in the maxim, 'Expression is the dress of *thought*';—and the principle that 'sound must seem an echo to the *sense*,' advanced in opposition to the makers of *versus inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ*. Looked at in the light of history, these maxims will appear to be something very different from 'a mere metrical multiplication-table of commonplaces the most mouldy with which criticism has baited its rat-traps.' They are rather

[1] Letter of Pope to Cromwell of December 17, 1710.

[2] Pope to Walsh, July 2, 1706.

the premisses from which the poet draws his emphatic conclusion of the necessity of imitating the classics.

(3.) A late eminent scholar has maintained that the *correctness* aimed at by Pope in English verse is analogous to the polish and nicety cultivated by Bembo and his followers, a judgment which implies that, in his enthusiastic admiration of the ancients, Pope had lost all perception of the change which had come over the world with the disappearance of Paganism, and that, in aiming at a classical purity of style, he sacrificed matter to form.[1] I cannot acquiesce in the justice of this opinion, though there are many expressions in the 'Essay on Criticism' which give it a certain plausible colour. Pope's praise of the classics is too partial; and his view of the course of criticism appears, to an age possessing a wider knowledge of history, crude and often inaccurate. But, as a judge, how far he was from being the narrow-minded bigot that is sometimes pretended may be seen from passages like the following:—

> "You then whose judgment the right course would steer,
> Know well each ancient's proper character,
> His fable, subject, scope, in every page:
> Religion, country, genius of his age:
> Without all these at once before your eyes,
> Cavil you may, but never criticise."

And:

> "Some foreign writers, some our own despise,
> The ancients only or the moderns prize.
> Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied
> To one small sect, and all are damned beside.
> Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,
> And force that sun but on a part to shine,
> Which not alone the southern wit sublimes,
> But ripens spirits in cold northern climes,
> Which from the first has shone on ages past,
> Enlights the present, and shall warm the last;
> Though each may feel increases and decays,
> And see now clearer and now darker days:
> Regard not then if wit be old or new,
> But blame the false, and value still the true."

[1] Mr. Mark Pattison. See his edition of 'Pope's Essay on Man,' p. 18.

What Pope endeavoured to imitate in the ancient writers was not their mere external style but their *method:*

> "Those rules, of old discovered, not devised,
> Are Nature still, but Nature methodized."

He regarded the classical authors as his masters in the art of thinking, and in this respect he is the herald of that spirit of criticism which animates the work of every great English artist in the eighteenth century. To quote one illustrious example:

"Instead of copying the touches of these great masters," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "copy only their conceptions. . . . Labour to invent on their general principles and way of thinking. Possess yourselves with their spirit. Consider with yourself how a Michael Angelo or a Raffaele would have treated this subject: and work yourself into a belief that your picture is to be seen and criticised by them when completed. Even attempt of this kind will rouse your powers." [1]

And he adds the reason for this imitation of principle in ancient masters generally:—

"I cannot help suspecting that in this instance the ancients had an easier task than the moderns. They had probably little or nothing to unlearn, as their manners were nearly approaching to this desirable simplicity; while the modern artist before he can see the truth of things is obliged to remove a veil with which the fashion of the time has thought proper to cover her." [2]

In Pope's time it was doubly difficult for the poet to penetrate to this truth of things. The ancients and the schoolmen had each had their own way of interpreting material Nature. The Polytheistic way had disappeared before the victorious advance of Christianity. The Mediæval way had been replaced by the growing philosophy of Bacon and Newton. But the poetical forms, which had formerly embodied the old modes of thought, survived to bewilder the intellect with phantom lights. When Classical Learning revived, the first treasures the painters and poets recovered from the returning wave were the images of Pagan Mythology. As Mediæval Learning waned, the last of

[1] Second Discourse of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

[2] Third Discourse of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

[illegible] were the Scholastic Wit, the Marvels [illegible] the Conceits of Pastoralism, and all the imagery that bewitched the imagination of Don Quixote. In the midst of these distracting influences the problem of the poet was how [illegible] with imaginative ardour, and yet consistently with [illegible] experience, and probability.

[illegible] to be the just method of conception is [illegible] 'Essay on Criticism' by a word which is used [illegible] as the words 'wit' and 'nature'—I [illegible] have noticed the frequency of its recur- [illegible] the 'Essay,' but not the fact that it is [illegible] as the correlative of 'wit,' implying [illegible] restraining influence of judgment on the [illegible] of what is just, the knowledge [illegible] refrain from saying. This, as Pope [illegible] as heaven-born as imagination

> [illegible] more needful than expense,
> [illegible] to taste—'tis sense!
> [illegible] is the gift of Heaven,
> [illegible] fairly worth the seven,
> [illegible] yourself you must perceive;
> [illegible] have it not to give."[1]

[illegible] Pope is generally said to have formed his [illegible] models, and no doubt, like all his contemporaries [illegible] influenced by what he read in the French [illegible] in the latter half of the seventeenth century. But the truth rather seems to be that Boileau, Racine, Molière and the like were, no less than Pope, the product of a general movement then spreading over the north of Europe, which the greater writers in France and England respectively adapted to the requirements of their own nation. Boileau says:—

> "Quelque sujet qu'on traite, ou plaisant, ou sublime,
> Que toujours le bons sens s'accorde avec la rime."[2]

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[1] 'Moral Essays,' iv. 41.

[2] 'L'Art Poétique,' chant i., 27.

But ages before Horace had declared, "Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons,"[1] and almost from the dawn of modern European literature this same good sense is seen opposing itself to the improbabilities and excesses arising out of the mediæval tradition. Good sense shows itself in every line of the 'Prologue' to the 'Canterbury Tales,' and in the 'Rime of Sir Thopas,' where Chaucer ridicules the gross improbabilities and long-winded descriptions of the metrical romances. Three parts in four of the charm of the 'Orlando Furioso' come from the pretended *naïveté* with which Ariosto repeats the marvels of the chronicle at which his ironical good sense is secretly laughing.[2] Don Quixote, recovering his good sense on his death-bed, asks pardon of Sancho for having made him believe that there really were knights-errant in the world. Shakespeare provides constant entertainment for the good sense of his audience at the expense of the Euphuists.[3] In the same way the clear good sense of Molière lays bare the 'truth of things' when he exhibits his valets before 'Les Précieuses Ridicules,' triumphant in the fashions of obsolete troubadours. All these writers have a method in common with each other and with the great classical authors, namely, a direct manner of conceiving and representing what is *natural*, in contradistinction to the extravagances, the refinements, the metaphysical subtleties, the straining after the marvellous and paradoxical, which had sprung in wild luxuriance on the soil of scholastic imagination.

[1] 'De Arte Poetica,' 309.

[2] A good instance of this irony in Ariosto occurs in a passage describing the marvellous bird of prey which endeavoured to carry off Rinaldo's horse Baiardo. After a stanza describing with the most picturesque minuteness the appearance of this romantic fowl Ariosto adds :—

"Forse era vero angel; ma non so dove
O quando un altro sia stato tale.
Non ho veduto mai, nè letto altrove,
Fuor ch' in Turpin, d'un sì fatto animale.
Questo rispetto a credere mi muove
Che l'angel fosse un diavolo infernale,
Che Malagigi in quella forma trasse
Acciò che la battaglia disturbasse."
'ORLANDO FURIOSO,' Canto 33, Stanza 85.

[3] His own style is of course crammed with euphuistic conceits, but they are merely the ornaments of diction, and do not affect his method of conception, which is genuinely classical in the best sense of the word.

The method which they had recommended by their pract Pope sought consciously to establish as a code of taste by regular system of reasoning. Looking back over centur full of insipid allegory and meaningless revivals of myth logy, he found Homer, in an uncritical and almost an unlettei age, describing natural objects in a style at once sublii and tasteful. As he passed on to the philosophical era Augustus, he came upon Virgil in a state of society whi in respect of development of thought and language, borc marked resemblance to his own, studying the poems of Hon with minute attention, and adapting the practice of the Gre poet with admirable elegance and propriety to the requi ments of his own fable. He could not but be impressed w a phenomenon so remarkable:

> "When first young Maro in his boundless mind,
> A work t'outlive immortal Rome designed,
> Perhaps he seemed above the critic's law,
> And but from Nature's fountain seemed to draw,
> But when t' examine every part he came,
> Nature and Homer were, he found, the same."

More than this. Pope found the best critics of Greece a Rome, Aristotle and Quintilian, drawing all the rules a examples of just rhetoric from the ancient authors, and the same time reasoning, by the light of natural good sen on contemporary aberrations from taste and propriety, precis analogous to the affectations of his own age and count The conclusion seemed inevitable. Amid all the fluctuatic of society, Nature and the mind of man remained unchange there was accordingly a law of taste; and this was to be d covered not in the passing barbarisms of ephemeral fashi in Euphuism, Marinism, Gongorism, and the like, but in t principles observed by those whose conception of Nature h survived the decay of language, empire, and religion:

> "Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
> To copy Nature is to copy them."

The effect of the 'Essay on Criticism,' or at least of t

current of thought which it represents, on the taste of the age was profound. Wit, or the practice of finding resemblances in objects apparently dissimilar, as it was cultivated throughout the seventeenth century by poets like Donne, Crashaw, Quarles, and Cowley, disappears altogether from the literary aims of the eighteenth century. With it vanishes the crowd of metaphors, similes, and hyperboles by which these poets sought to recommend their manner of thinking. Wit, as we see from the 'Essay on Criticism,' was regarded in the early part of the century as a proper object in poetry, but as the conceptions of the poet were now based upon Nature itself, its operations gradually restricted themselves to satire or to moral and didactic reflection. Thus, while the range of imagination became more limited, its objects became more clear and definite. An analogous change took place in the form of poetry. In emulation of the classical authors, the followers of the new mode paid great attention to the selection of subject, to the arrangement of the fable or design of their composition, and to the just distribution of all its parts. Instead of ingenuity in the discovery of unheard-of metaphors, which was the ambition of the typical seventeenth-century poet, the poet of the eighteenth century sought to present a general thought in the language best adapted to bring it forcibly before the mind of the reader. In this respect, works so unlike each other as Thomson's 'Seasons,' Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' the 'Deserted Village' of Goldsmith, and 'The Village' of Crabbe, may all be said to be the fruits of the 'Essay on Criticism.'

I do not for a moment seek to deny that Pope's enthusiasm for classical antiquity frequently betrayed him into narrow and fallacious views. In his rebound from the affectations of an obsolete mediævalism, he closed his eyes to the fact that the works of the great mediæval authors were founded on a perception of Nature fundamentally as true and clear as that of Homer himself. He failed to perceive, also, what scope and extension the materials of romance and theology gave to the

imagination of later poets such as Shakespeare and Milton; what delightful associations of idea, and what subtle melodies of language, were at the command of those who, living on the verge of the old and new worlds, were able to invest genuinely classical modes of conception with all the richness and colour of Gothic fancy.

The critical defects of a work so designed lie naturally on the surface. The Essay has many incorrect observations, and, in spite of its own axioms, many bad rhymes, many faulty grammatical constructions. But these cannot weigh against the substantial merit of the performance. They cannot obscure the truth that the poem is, what its title pretends, an 'Essay on Criticism,' an attempt made, for the first time in English literature, and in the midst of doubts, perplexities, and distractions, of which we, in our position of the idle heirs of that age, can only have a shadowy conception, to erect a standard of judgment founded in justice of thought and accuracy of expression. Nor will it be denied that, as a poem, the critical and philosophical nature of the subject is enlivened by bold, brilliant, and beautiful imagery. Lastly, when it is remembered that this extraordinary soundness of judgment and maturity of style are exhibited by a young man who was only twenty-three when the poem was published, and may have been under twenty-one when it was composed, the panegyric of Johnson, startling as it seems at first sight, will not be thought after all to be greatly exaggerated.

CHAPTER IV.

INTRODUCTION TO LONDON LIFE.

Correspondence with Wycherley, Cromwell, and Caryll — Will's Coffee House—Button's—Addison—Rowe — Steele — Jervas — Completion of 'Windsor Forest'—Prologue to 'Cato'—Satires on Dennis and Ambrose Philips.

1704—1713.

We know little or nothing of the manner of Pope's introduction to society. It would have been most interesting to learn how the solitary student of Windsor Forest really felt and behaved when making his first appearance on the scene of life and action. Letters of his indeed survive, which either were, or profess to have been, written at that period. These are valuable as revelations of his character. But, even when they are authentic, it must be allowed that they are singularly empty of incident, and that, as records of genuine feeling and opinion, they are almost worthless.

It was a misfortune for Pope that he had no youth. Deprived of the advantages of friendships with his equals at school, and brought up, by force of circumstances, in the constant company of elderly parents who denied him nothing, he obtained his first ideas of men and things exclusively from intercourse with books. On the other hand, the precocity of his intellect brought him early into contact with men much older than himself, who, while admiring his genius and deferring to his judgment, treated him with an air of patronage natural to their superior age and knowledge of the world. To place himself as far as he could on an equality with these elderly friends, he put forth all his power to make his letters to them appear worthy of his genius, and he thus acquired an artificial

manner which spoiled him as a writer of English prose. In after years he came to perceive that letters written with such a motive were of little value even as compositions.

"This letter," he writes to Swift in 1729, "like all mine, will be a rhapsody: it is many years ago since I wrote as a wit. How many occurrences or informations must one omit if one determined to say nothing that one could not say prettily. I lately received from the widow of one dead correspondent, and the father of another, several of my own letters of about fifteen and twenty years old; and it was not unentertaining to myself to observe how, and by what means, I ceased to be a witty writer, as either my experience grew on the one hand, or my affection to my correspondents on the other."[1]

He speaks here with very imperfect self-knowledge. To the end of his life the self-conscious habits he had acquired in his boyhood prevented him from writing to any correspondent naturally and conversationally: with none, when the opportunity presented itself, did he ever forbear from saying a thing 'prettily,' or hesitate to substitute fiction for fact, pointed sentences for heart-felt convictions. Swift justly criticised this method of letter writing:—

"I find," he says in his answer to Pope's letter just cited, "you have been a writer of letters almost from your infancy; and by your own confession had schemes even then of epistolary fame. Montaigne says that if he could have excelled in any kind of writing it would have been in letters; but I doubt they would not have been natural, for it is plain that all Pliny's letters were written with a view of publishing, and I accuse Voiture himself of the same crime, although he be an author I am fond of. They cease to be letters when they become a *jeu d'esprit*."[2]

This motive, the desire of public applause, accounts equally for the character of Pope's letters to his early correspondents, and for the unscrupulousness with which in later years he mutilated, corrected, and even invented the letters he published during his own lifetime. He was fond of quoting the lines of Seneca:—

"Infelix ille!
Qui notus nimis omnibus
Ignotus moritur sibi."

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[1] Pope to Swift, Nov. 28, 1729. [2] Swift to Pope, Feb. 26, 1729-30.

But, in spite of all his professions, no man ever lived to whom they were more applicable. To understand this we have but to compare the letters of Wycherley actually written to Pope with those which the latter published in his 'authorised' volume; the letters actually written to Cromwell with the hint he gave Spence of the esoteric meaning of those letters; the letters actually written to Caryll, with the same letters altered and readdressed to more distinguished correspondents.

In 1735, when Pope's correspondence was first published, he had acquired a European reputation, a position of ease and independence, and a habit of mixing on terms of complete equality with the leading representatives of the English aristocracy. His vanity perhaps caused him to believe that the case had never been different with him; it certainly induced him to impose upon the public a youthful portrait of the ideal self he worshipped, consistent no doubt with the image in his own mind, but not corresponding with the facts of his history.

William Wycherley, at the time when he made Pope's acquaintance, was about sixty-four years of age. He had long ceased to write for the theatre, but he was still a popular figure in the world of fashion, and an acquaintance with him was of importance to a young and ambitious author. The poet appears to have been introduced to him at the house of his neighbour Englefield of Whiteknights, where his society proved so agreeable to the old dramatist that a correspondence was soon established between them. The letters published by Pope himself are intended to convey, and did convey to the world, an impression of the ascendency at once exerted by his superior intelligence over the mind of his correspondent. He rebukes the latter for the vein of flattery in which he addresses him; criticises his literary work with relentless frankness; and at the same time bears with patience the petulant outbreaks of the vain old man. On the other side, Wycherley, who is represented as at first receiving Pope's criticisms with deference and gratitude, gradually grows peevish under his plain speaking, and at last openly exhibits his resentment against

the poet by upbraiding him with his failure to redeem the promise of a visit.

The actual letters of Wycherley to Pope, now published for the first time, show that the poet has curiously reversed the part played by the two correspondents. Here it is Wycherley who tells Pope, in the first letter, that his compliments are too broad he submits his Miscellany to his young friend's judgment but he displays no trace of ill-humour at the latter's criticism far from complaining of the poet for not visiting him, his letters are filled with trivial apologies for failing to fulfil his promise of coming to Pope in Windsor Forest. All that he writes is in the 'witty' style, at once laboured and obscure of the previous generation, full of profuse and insincere compliment, showing indeed the justice of Pope's report to Spence of the badness of his memory,[1] but at the same time displaying a natural consciousness of superiority to his correspondent as an inexperienced boy. Of Pope's letters to Wycherley we know no more than what he has chosen to publish: but from the terms in which Wycherley writes to him, it is hardly likely that his critical censure was conveyed in a form of such uncompromising plainness as he would have us believe. As to the cause of the breach between them, all is uncertainty The correspondence, which begins in 1704, ceases with Pope's letter of May 2, 1710. The latter, in his letters to Cromwell chooses to believe that his friend had taken offence at the plainness of his criticisms, but the whole tenor of Wycherley's letters makes this explanation improbable. Dennis afterwards declared that Pope had written a satire upon Wycherley which had come to the other's knowledge, and though the poet probably never proceeded so far as this, it may very well be that some sarcastic speech of his was repeated to Wycherley, for in one of Pope's letters to Cromwell he says:—

"I thank God there is nothing out of myself which I would be at the trouble of seeking, except a friend—a happiness I once hoped to

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 2.

possess in Mr. Wycherley; but *quantum mutatus ab illo!* I have for some years been employed much like children that build houses with cards, endeavouring very busily and eagerly to raise a friendship, *which the first breath of any ill-natured by-stander could puff away.*"[1]

A kind of reconciliation was brought about by Cromwell in 1711, but the correspondence between Pope and Wycherley, as far as we know, was never resumed, and after the death of the dramatist in 1715 his papers were left in other hands.

The correspondence with Cromwell is somewhat different in character. This at least is perfectly genuine. The letters were given, about 1720, by Cromwell to one Elizabeth Thomas, who had formerly been his mistress, and she being in needy circumstances, disposed of them in 1726 to Curll, by whom they were published in the first volume of a Miscellany. Pope therefore was unable afterwards to alter them; hence, like the letters of Caryll, they furnish, as far as they go, satisfactory materials for the poet's biography.

Henry Cromwell had many of the intellectual qualities of Wycherley, whose friend he was, but he wanted his original power. He was a gentleman of independent means, of the same family as the Protector, possessing property in Lincolnshire. According to Johnson, who was informed that he used to hunt, though in a tye-wig, he was not without some country tastes. His sympathies, however, were with the town, where he was well-known as a frequenter of coffee-houses and theatres, and as a great lover of female society in all places, whether at Bath or in Drury Lane. He had also some reputation as an author, having been a fellow contributor with Dryden to Tonson's Miscellany, and having undoubtedly a turn for graceful complimentary verse. When his correspondence with Pope began he was in his forty-eighth or forty-ninth year,[2] and naturally enough the young and unknown student, while seeking to display his own wit, wrote to a man of such

[1] Letter from Pope to Cromwell of Oct. 12, 1710.

[2] Mr. Carruthers says he was born on the 15th of January, 1658, but 'The County Journal,' noticing his death, says, "29th **June**, 1728, died Mr. Henry Cromwell, **a** noted critic and poet, *in his 70th year.*"

consideration with a certain air of respect. The correspondence between them was at least conducted on terms of perfect equality; or, as Cromwell afterwards expressed it, "whatever you wrote to me was humour and familiar raillery."[1] In later years, when the reputation of Cromwell as a wit had become obsolete, while Pope himself was at the height of his fame, the poet was no doubt annoyed at the publication of correspondence which he conceived might injure his dignity in the opinion of the public. But his pretence that his letters to Cromwell were written "not in sober sadness" but with a hidden intention, was one which could only have imposed upon the credulity of Spence.[2] This correspondence extends from July, 1707, to December, 1711, and appears to have been brought to a close through the resentment of Cromwell at Pope's comments on his turn for pedantic criticism.

The third of those whose correspondence with Pope begins before the latter had become famous was John Caryll, the inspirer of the 'Rape of the Lock.' Caryll was long supposed by historians, and among others by Macaulay, to be identical with Secretary Caryll, who shared the exile of James II. But as the correspondence, discovered by the late Mr. Dilke, and first published in this edition, shows, Pope's friend resided on his property of Ladyholt in Sussex, and survived the Secretary for some years. He was in fact the nephew of the latter, and was himself a man of weight and authority with the Roman Catholic party in England. Though without literary genius, he had the highest appreciation of it in others, and was sensible and tolerant in his judgments. Pope valued as it deserved his honourable rectitude, and trusted the soundness of his taste. He felt that he might make him the confidant of his own more serious feelings, and his letters to him often contain sentiments that he would never have dreamt of imparting to Wycherley or Cromwell. Whenever in his rambles, at Binfield, he lighted on what he thought a train of philosophic

[1] Letter from Cromwell to Pope of July 6, 1727.

[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 167.

reflection, or if, in London, he sought relaxation from the perpetual strain of coffee-house wit, he relieved himself by despatching an essay or a sermon to Caryll at Ladyholt. Thus, though the letters to Wycherley, Cromwell, and Caryll are all alike compositions smelling of the lamp, the correspondence with these three persons reflects certain real aspects of the poet's character. It displays, on the one hand, a meditative, self-conscious, imaginative spirit nurtured by solitude, and on the other an eager craving for distinction produced by contact with men who had achieved a certain position in the fashionable world. The time had come when this side of Pope's genius was to be strongly developed in London society, where he soon indeed became *nimis notus omnibus*, but where he also learnt the rare art of adapting conversational idiom to the purposes of poetical diction.

In his early boyhood he had prevailed with his parents to allow him to come to London for the purpose of studying French and Italian. But his first real introduction to town life was through Wycherley, whom, as he told Spence, he used to follow like a dog, and who was well qualified to furnish him with the necessary social experience. Throughout Europe the language of society had for a long time been helping to mould the language of literature. In France the moving influence came from the fashionable Hôtel. In England it proceeded from the coffee-houses, in which men assembled according to their particular tastes, the politicians, as we see from the 'Tatler,' meeting at the St. James's, the critics at Will's, and the men of learning at the Grecian.[1] Wycherley's favourite coffee-house was Will's, which still retained something of its old prestige as the chief centre for the wits. Since Dryden's death, however, it had greatly declined in character. Swift said that he never heard worse conversation than at Will's, and it is easy to believe him, for nothing becomes more intolerable than a society in which literature is the sole topic of discussion. As

[1] Tatler, No. 1.

the quality of literary discussion degenerated, many of the frequenters of the coffee-house, by a natural reaction, began to amuse themselves with filthy and profane talk. When Pope made his entrance into the circle one of the leading spirits was a certain friend of Cromwell's named Tidcombe. "In his latter days," writes Richardson of Pope, "he loved to talk of Titcum, one who used to be of the party with him, Gay, Swift, Craggs, and Addison." Like many men of his kind Tidcombe had probably a good deal of wit, though not of an edifying nature, and Pope, who adapted his style to his company, tells Martha Blount that Tidcombe values him for his "pretty atheistical jests."[1] He shows, however, that he rated him at his true worth, for in a letter to Cromwell he says: "I would as soon write like Durfey as live like Tidcomb, whose beastly laughable life is at once nasty and diverting."[2] After a time it seems that this man's conversation must have passed all bounds, and he was forced to leave the coffee-house. Many, however, of his old acquaintances found the place dull without him, and among them Pope's friend, Cromwell. "There is a grand revolution at Will's Coffee-house," writes Gay to Caryll in 1715. "Morice has quitted for a coffee-house in the City, and Tidcombe is restored, to the great joy of Cromwell, who was at a great loss for a person to converse with upon the Fathers and Church History."

This 'Revolution' was an outward expression of changes which had been taking place in society at large. The coffee-house of which Will's was the type belonged to a by-gone age: its exclusively literary traditions no longer harmonised with existing circumstances. As party spirit developed after the Revolution, and the value of literature in influencing opinion became apparent, the statesmen on either side began to mix in familiar intercourse with the writers whom they thought best qualified to advance their interests. On this principle the

[1] Letter from Pope to Martha Blount, Vol. IV., p. 255.

[2] Letter from Pope to Cromwell of Aug. 29, 1709.

Kit-Kat Club had been founded at the beginning of the century, and on the other side Swift, after he had joined the Tories, zealously worked to institute the Society of the Brothers, whereby he hoped at once to form an intellectual counterpoise to the Kit-Kat, and to temper the excessive ardour of the October Club.

By degrees in associations of this kind, where every member could either write himself, or appreciate good writing in others, wit, as was natural, prevailed over politics. The men of letters became the acknowledged leaders of the Clubs; but, on the other hand, though they all met for the purposes of conversation, and though the chief social interest was often the promotion of some literary design, it was felt that the bond of union lay in politics. Hence, although any man of recognized wit could obtain access to a literary-political coffee-house, literary decisions were mainly determined in it by the political preference of the majority of the society. The Whig or Tory Club cried up respectively the genius of the Whig or Tory poet, and if a wit, whose political ideas were of a different colour from that of the society which he frequented, happened to engage in a personal or critical dispute with some member of the inner circle, he was soon made aware that the judgment of the esoteric brotherhood was not dictated by mere abstract canons of taste.

Among the literary Whigs none could pretend to rival the authority of Addison. He had already filled important offices of state, and though now out of employment, the popularity of the 'Spectator,' in which he was recognized as the principal writer, had greatly increased his prestige. By taste and temperament he was utterly opposed to the excesses of party spirit. But he recognized that excess of Toryism rather than of Whiggism was the danger to which the country was chiefly exposed, and which could be best encountered by turning public opinion in the Whig direction. Withdrawing himself therefore from the decaying literary society at Will's, of which he had long been a member, in 1712 he set up his man, Daniel

Button, in a house in the same street nearly opposite, where he gathered round him a group of Whigs, for the most part well-known essayists and poets, and in immediate touch with the Parliamentary Opposition. These contributed papers to the 'Spectator,' and were commended in its pages by its chief author. The leading members of the 'little senate' were Steele, Budgell, Philips, Carey, Davenant, and Colonel Brett. Addison, says Pope, used to breakfast with one or other of them at his lodgings in St. James's Place, dine at taverns with them, then to Button's, and then to some tavern again for supper in the evening; this being then the usual round of his life.[1]

Pope, as we have seen, was introduced to Addison by Steele, whose acquaintance the poet had probably made at Will's. He says that he then liked Addison as well as he liked any man, and was very fond of his conversation. Addison, knowing the strong influences which would draw the young man into the current of the Tory party, and perhaps hoping in the atmosphere of Button's to bring him over to his own side, advised him "not to be content with the applause of half the nation." The advice fell in seasonably with Pope's opinions. His religion prevented him from hoping for any state employment; he had suffered from the bigotry of religious party spirit in consequence of his 'Essay on Criticism'; his taste was repugnant to politics,[2] and his moralising temper made him inclined to take up an independent position. "I confess," he writes to Caryll, "I scorn narrow souls of all parties; and if I renounce my reason in religious matters, I will never do it in any other affair."[3] Accordingly he mixed freely with the society at Button's, and was apparently on friendly terms with most of them. He was liberal in praising the poetry of Tickell and Ambrose Philips.[4] The company of Rowe, whom he invited to his house, delighted him. "I am just returned from the

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 196.

[2] As to this see Spence's 'Anecdotes,' 199.

[3] Pope to Caryll, June 12, 1713.

[4] Letters to Caryll of Nov. 29 1712, and Dec. 21, 1712.

country," he writes to Caryll, "whither Mr. Rowe did me the favour to accompany me and to pass a week at Binfield. I need not tell you how much a man of his turn could not but entertain me; but I must acquaint you there is a vivacity and gaiety of disposition almost peculiar to that gentleman, which renders it impossible to part from him without that uneasiness and chagrin which generally succeeds all great pleasures." [1]

But of all the society he seems to have been most closely allied with Steele. It was Steele who persuaded him in 1711 to write his 'Ode on St. Cecilia's Day' for Clayton to set to music; and Steele doubtless who obtained from him for publication in the 'Spectator' of the 14th May, 1712, his 'Messiah,' and afterwards his Comment on Adrian's verses to his soul published in the 'Spectator' of December 10th of the same year. When the 'Spectator' was discontinued and the 'Guardian' started, he contributed to the latter paper the various essays preserved among his prose works; but when Steele, carried away by party spirit, dropped the 'Guardian' for the 'Englishman' he thought it time to halt. "I assure you, as to myself," says he to Caryll, "I have quite done with these papers for the future. The little I have done, and the great respect I bear Mr. Steele as a man of wit, has rendered me a suspected Whig to some of the over-zealous and violent. But as old Dryden said before me, it is not the violent I design to please; and in very truth, sir, I believe they will all find me, at long run, a mere papist." [2]

Another zealous Whig with whom he was on particularly friendly terms was Charles Jervas the portrait painter, whose house in Cleveland Court furnished him with quarters whenever he came to London. Jervas was a pupil of Sir Godfrey Kneller, and in the esteem of the time stood second only to him in his profession, though his reputation has since entirely disappeared.

[1] Letter to Caryll, Sept. 20, 1713. He surprised Spence in later years by giving the same character of Rowe.—Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 284.

[2] Letter to Caryll, Oct. 17, 1713.

Pope, who seems to have early had some inclination to painting, which was encouraged by his father, was advised by Caryll in 1712 to take lessons from Jervas. He acted on the suggestion, with some enthusiasm but with little success, as we see by his own confession:—

"They tell us," says he in a letter to Caryll of August 31st, 1713, "when St. Luke painted, an angel came and finished the work; and it will be thought hereafter, that when I painted the devil put the last hand to my pieces, they are so begrimed and smutted. It is, however, some mercy that I see my faults; for I have been so out of conceit with my former performances, that I have thrown away three Dr. Swifts, two Duchesses of Montague, one Virgin Mary, the Queen of England, besides half a score Earls, and a Knight of the Garter. I will make essays on such vulgar subjects as these, before I grow so impudent as to attempt to draw Mr. Caryll: though I find my hand most successful in drawing of friends, and those I most esteem, insomuch that my masterpieces have been one of Dr. Swift, and one of Mr. Betterton."

These lessons proved the basis of a warm friendship between the poet and the painter, a man of a kind heart and with a genuine taste for literature. It is curious to think that the once fashionable portrait painter should now only be remembered through his Translation of Don Quixote and the beautiful poetical Epistle addressed to him by Pope. Though Pope was not successful as a painter, many passages in his poems show that he had studied the art, and some that he looked on nature itself with a pictorial eye.[1]

While he kept company with the Whigs at Button's he showed that he was quite ready when the opportunity offered to celebrate the Tory Government. At the instance of Lord Lansdown he added a hundred lines (beginning 'In that blest moment') to the original draft of 'Windsor Forest,' and published the poem some time in the early part of March, 1713.

[1] Such, for instance, as the 'Epistle to Jervas'; the beautiful simile from a painting in the 'Essay on Criticism' (484-93); the lines in 'Windsor Forest' (23-4):—

"Here in full light the russet plains extend,
There wrapt in clouds the bluish hills ascend;"

and those in the Fourth Moral Essay (81-2):—

"The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
And strength of shade contends with strength of light."

It would appear from Pope's letter to Caryll of November 29, 1712, that he was at that date already contemplating the addition to his poem. The Tories were in fact as anxious for a poetical glorification of the Peace of Utrecht as the Whigs had been, when the subject of the day was the campaign of Blenheim, and it is a remarkable proof of the changed temper of the nation that a Whig poet should have been the first to celebrate the triumph of the Ministry. Pope writes to Caryll in high praise of Tickell's 'Prospect of Peace,' which had recently appeared and had been eulogised by Addison in the 'Spectator' of October 30, 1712, with the added expression of a hope that "the poem would meet with a reward from its patrons as so noble a performance deserved." Partly in consequence of this advertisement, no doubt, the poem ran through five editions, and Pope, finding some good lines in it bearing a striking resemblance to some he had composed himself, asks Caryll's opinion on their relative value.

It seems probable therefore that Lansdown, an active Tory, and one of the twelve peers created in 1711, had been commissioned by the Ministry to play the part which Boyle had performed in suggesting the composition of 'The Campaign.' The results to Pope were not so immediately lucrative as they had proved to Addison, but the reputation which the poem justly gained for him went far towards making his fortune by procuring him the friendship of Swift, who writes to Stella on March 9, 1713: "Mr. Pope has published a fine poem called 'Windsor Forest.' Read it." Warton says that "a person of no small rank informed him that Mr. Addison was inexpressibly chagrined at the noble conclusion of 'Windsor Forest,' both as a politician and as a poet,—as a politician, because it so highly celebrated that treaty of peace which he deemed so pernicious to the liberties of Europe; and as a poet because he was deeply conscious that his own Campaign, that gazette in rhyme, contained no strokes of such genuine and sublime poetry."[1] This story rests on no foundation. How far Addison

[1] 'Essay on the Genius of Pope,' 5th edition, vol. i., p. 29.

was jealous of the poetical superiority of 'Windsor Forest' w
have no means of knowing: but that he could not have di
approved of it on political grounds is evident from the prai
which he had already bestowed on Tickell's 'Peace.'

It may fairly be concluded too, that if Addison had be
'inexpressibly chagrined' at the praise Pope obtained f
'Windsor Forest,' he would not have accepted his 'Prologu
to 'Cato,' which play was acted within two months after tl
appearance of the poem. Pope had been allowed to read tl
tragedy in February, 1713. "It drew tears from me," h
said, "in several parts of the fourth and fifth acts, where tl
beauty of virtue appears so charming that I believe if it com
upon the theatre we shall enjoy that which Plato thought tl
greatest pleasure an exalted soul could be capable of, a view
virtue itself drest in person, colour, and action. The emotic
which the mind will feel from this character, and the sent
ments of humanity which the distress of such a person
Cato will stir up in us, must necessarily fill an audience wi
so glorious a disposition, and sovereign a love of virtue, th
I question if any play has ever conduced so immediately
morals as this."[1] He afterwards said to Spence: "Wh
Mr. Addison had finished his 'Cato,' he brought it to m
desired to have my sincere opinion on it, and left it with n
for three or four days. I gave him my opinion sincerel
which was 'that I thought he had better not act it, and th
he would get reputation enough by only printing it.' This
said as thinking the lines well written, but the piece n
theatrical enough."[2] It is difficult to see what motive Po
can have had for deliberately inventing this story, but it is
the whole charitable to suppose that, having forgotten his ear
opinion of the play, he threw his more mature judgment into tl
form of a piquant anecdote which had no foundation in realit

The sentiments which he expressed in his letter to Cary
were repeated in the Prologue he wrote for the play:—

[1] Pope to Caryll February, 1712–13. [2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 196.

"Virtue confessed in human shape he draws,
What Plato thought, and godlike Cato was:
No common object to your sight displays,
But what with pleasure Heav'n itself surveys,
A brave man struggling in the storms of fate,
And greatly falling with a falling state."

It was not, however, this spectacle which really moved the London public. What the audience seized upon, when the play was produced on April the 13th, was the allegorical reference to the political situation with which the mind of the nation was fully occupied. "The town is so fond of it," Pope writes to Caryll on April 30, 1713, "that the orange-wenches and fruit-women in the parks offer the books at the side of the coaches, and the prologue and epilogue are cried about the streets by the common hawkers."

Amid the chorus of approval, however, one voice was heard in opposition. Like all unsuccessful authors, Dennis had a great contempt for contemporary judgment, besides possessing a clear perception and many sound critical instincts. He saw the fundamental weakness of 'Cato' on dramatic grounds, and no doubt, as his manner was, spoke loudly and dogmatically on the subject in the coffee-houses. Pope, in whose mind Dennis's remarks on his own deformity had rankled bitterly, heard of his rage, and perceiving an opportunity of revenge, had recourse to one of those curious stratagems of which his history is so full, and which appear to have been inspired partly by vindictiveness, partly by sheer love of mischief. He induced Lintot the publisher to urge Dennis to print some remarks on 'Cato,' and the latter, only too ready to be persuaded, brought out a violent pamphlet, the most humorous part of which is preserved in Johnson's Life of Addison Hardly had this appeared, when it was followed by an answer in the shape of 'The Narrative of Dr. Robert Norris concerning the strange and deplorable Frenzy of Mr. John Denn—, an officer of the Custom House.'[1] According to Dennis, Pope himself offered,

[1] See Prose Works, Vol. X., p. 450.

through Lintot, to show Addison the MS. of this pamphlet. As the humour of the piece depended entirely on its personality, it naturally did not commend itself to the taste of the ex-'Spectator,' who, being well content to leave 'Cato' to the public judgment, told Steele to write Lintot the following letter:—

"MR. LINTOT,

"Mr. Addison desired me to tell you, that he wholly disapproves the manner of treating Mr. Dennis in a little pamphlet by way of Dr. Norris's Account. When he thinks fit to take notice of Mr. Dennis's objections to his writings, he will do it in a way Mr. Dennis shall have no just reason to complain of. But when the papers above mentioned were offered to be communicated to him, he said he could not, either in honour or conscience, be privy to such a treatment, and was sorry to hear of it.

"I am, Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"RICHARD STEELE."

In this incident we may see undoubtedly the beginning of the breach which afterwards took place between Pope and Addison. The former must have been galled at the refusal of the author of 'Cato' to accept his aid; he would have reflected still more bitterly that Addison had probably fathomed his motive for intervening in the quarrel; and what would have irritated him most of all, if its contents were reported to him, would have been the somewhat haughty letter which the man whom he was professing to serve had caused to be written to a bookseller by the hand of a third party.[1]

[1] I have followed the narrative of Dennis as given in his 'Remarks on the Dunciad' (1729). In his remarks on the 'Rape of the Lock' (1728) he tells substantially the same story, but, obviously writing without the letter before him, says that Addison had caused Steele to write to *him*, saying that he knew nothing of the pamphlet till he saw it in print. He imputes, as he naturally would, the motive of Pope's suggestion to Lintot to the envy the former felt at Addison's success. This is of course unjust. But as Pope never denied the allegation of Dennis,—whose truthfulness besides has never been questioned,—that it was through his instigation that Lintot urged Dennis to print his 'Remarks on Cato,' the old critic's story must be believed. Mr. Dilke, indeed, endeavours to prove that Dr. Norris's Account was not written by Pope. He urges that Dennis never spoke of Pope as the author till long after the publication (see 'Papers of a Critic,' p. 255). But this is a mistake. Dennis wrote to B. B. (Barton Booth) in 1717: "And now let him, if he pleases, have recourse

Almost at the same time he obtained what he thought proof of an unfriendly disposition towards him at Button's. It has been already said that the sixth volume of Tonson's Miscellany, which concluded with Pope's Pastorals, opened with those of Ambrose Philips. The latter were insipid compositions. They were a compromise between the Eclogues of Virgil and the 'Shepherd's Calendar' of Spenser, exhibiting the classical form of the one and the English nomenclature, though not the rustic dialect of the other. Repeating all the usual stock-in-trade of pastoral poetry, lovers' complaints, descriptions of rural scenery, compliments, riddles, and proverbs, they affected a certain superficial originality by substituting the fairy mythology of England for the rural deities of Greece and Rome. To the singular sweetness of versification which characterised Pope's Pastorals they could make no pretence. Nevertheless on their first appearance they were much admired. Pope himself, who, as his own work had been highly praised by competent judges, could afford to be magnanimous, 'agreed with the Tatler that we had no better Eclogues in our language,' and spoke with special praise of some lines in Philips' fifth Eclogue, to which he said 'nothing could be objected except that they were too lofty for pastoral.'[1]

As time went on, however, he perceived that Philips' performance was being exalted, and certainly unjustly, at the expense of his own. His rival shepherd was a man of mark at Button's. A great talker, vain, self-conscious, observable for the foppery of his dress, and particularly his red stockings, Philips was also noted as one of the most strenuous Whigs in the coffee-house, and as usual, political zeal procured for his poetry an admiration which was not due to its intrinsic merits. Addison had bestowed, in the 'Spectator,' lavish praise on his not very remarkable invention of replacing with the fairies the fauns, satyrs, and wood-nymphs of the Pagan pastoral.

to his old method of lies and slander, *and print a second Dr. Norris's Account.*"—'Remarks on Windsor Forest.'

[1] Letter to Cromwell, Oct. 28, 1710.

since no man can be deceived or delighted with the imitation of what he is ignorant of." But as the Pastorals of Philips were in essence, like Pope's, imitations not of Nature, but of a mere literary convention, no reader could be so foolish as to be 'deceived' by their resemblance to truth, and the more they departed from convention for the purpose of assuming a superficial colour of reality, the more childish did the poet's device appear. Could any reasonable being imagine English rustics alternately piping to each other, after the manner of Sicilian shepherds, in celebration of the charms of their respective mistresses? If not, how could it help matters to call the speakers in the poems Lobbin and Hobbinol, instead of Damon and Menalcas, or to pretend that beings so artificial might believe in Puck, though they had rejected Pan?

This much at least Pope saw very clearly, and he had a right to be angry at the fulsome flattery of the criticism. But he was touched on a more personal point. Though his Pastorals had appeared in the same volume as Philips', they appeared to be deliberately ignored by the writer in the 'Guardian,' who maintained that there had been only four true masters of pastoral poetry in above two thousand years, "Theocritus, who left his dominions to Virgil; Virgil, who left his to his son Spenser; and Spenser, who was succeeded by his eldest born Philips." Pope, who knew that, in respect of melody of versification, there was no comparison between the two sets of Pastorals, set himself to redress the injustice by a device of characteristic subtlety. He wrote a sixth paper on Pastoral, professedly by the same hand as those which had already appeared in the 'Guardian,' with the pretended motive of clearing the writer from the charge of partiality in having made no mention of the poems of Pope.[1] Imitating, with admirable dexterity, the tone of exaggerated praise which had characterised the earlier criticisms, he continued to illustrate the true principles of pastoral poetry from Philips'

[1] 'Guardian,' No. 40.

practice, but in such a way as to show the judicious read[illegible] by the examples given, either the absurdity of Philips or t[illegible] superior merit of Pope. Thus assuming 'simplicity to be th[illegible] distinguishing characteristic of Pastoral,' he observes inno[illegible]cently, that he has often wondered why Virgil did not seek t[illegible] imitate the Doric of Theocritus in old Latin, as Philips ha[illegible] done in old English. 'For example might he not have said 'quoi' instead of 'cui'; quoijum for cujum; volt for vult &c.; as well as our modern hath 'welladay' for 'alas,' 'whileome' for 'of old,' 'make mock' for 'deride,' and 'witless younglings' for 'simple lambs,' &c., by which means he had attained as much of the air of Theocritus as Philips hath of Spenser.' He speaks of the 'great judgment' which Philips had shown in describing wolves in England, and of the 'poetical creation' by which he 'hath raised up finer beds of flowers than the most industrious gardener; his endives, lilies, king-cups, and daffodils, blow all in the same season.'

After citing several passages from the rival poets in which, though the preference is always given to Philips, the example shows the great superiority of Pope; 'It is a justice I owe to Mr. Philips,' says the critic, 'to discover those parts in which no man can compare with him.' First he praises his 'beautiful rusticity,' as shown in the following lines:

> "O woful day! O day of woe! quoth she,
> And woful I, who live the day to see!"

"The simplicity of diction," he observes gravely, "the melancholy flowing of the numbers, the solemnity of the sound, and the easy turn of the words in this dirge (to make use of our author's expression), are extremely elegant.

"In another of his Pastorals, a shepherd utters a dirge not much inferior to the former, in the following lines:—

> "Ah me, the while! ah me! the luckless day,
> Ah luckless lad! the rather might I say;
> Ah silly I! more silly than my sheep,
> Which on the flowery plains I once did keep.

"How he still charms the ear with those artful repetitions of the epithets! and how significant is the last verse! I defy the most common reader to repeat them without feeling some motions of compassion!"

He next dwells with approval on Philips' versification of trite proverbs; and finally eulogises his provincialisms, citing with grave approbation a ludicrous old 'pastoral ballad' in the Somersetshire dialect, which he professes to have discovered. "I am loth," he says in conclusion, "to show my fondness for antiquity so far as to prefer this ancient British author to our present English writers of Pastoral; but I cannot avoid making this obvious remark, that Philips hath hit into the same road with this old West Country bard of ours."

The essay was sent anonymously to the 'Guardian,' and it is said that Steele was deceived by the irony, and showing it to Pope, protested that he would "never publish any paper where one member of the Club was complimented at the expense of another." Pope, affecting indifference, begged that the paper might appear, and it was accordingly printed, to the great amusement of those who understood the jest, but, as may be imagined, to the no small disgust of Philips. The latter seems to have been so enraged as to lose all sense of good breeding; he hung up a birch-rod in Button's, and swore that if Pope appeared there he would use it on his person. The poet may have thought he was likely to keep his word; at any rate about this period he apparently discontinued his attendance at the Club, and began to resume the company of his old associates at Will's.

CHAPTER V.

'THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.'[1]

[illegible] — [illegible] — [illegible] — [illegible] Poems.

[illegible] boyhood [illegible] the gr[illegible]ndwor[illegible] [illegible] translating the Latin poets; then pro[illegible] [illegible] classical forms, and almos[illegible] [illegible] himself those just principles [illegible] [illegible] his true goal, imitation of th[illegible] [illegible] The year 1712 saw him, with a now mature[illegible] [illegible] reducing his critical principle[illegible] [illegible] poem at once the most original, the mos[illegible] [illegible] that he ever produced, a compo[illegible] [illegible] unapproached for excellence in its own class [illegible] from which even the harshest judges of his genius ar[illegible] [illegible] their enthusiastic admiration.

The history of the 'Rape of the Lock,' of its origin, of the [illegible] of the rudimentary conception, and of its subsequent development, stands among the most interesting stories in the annals of poetry, and justifies the boast of the author that the change made in the form of the poem was one of the greatest proofs of judgment of anything he ever did.[1] In 1711, Robert, 7th Lord Petre, a young man of twenty, in a freak of gallantry cut a lock of hair from the head of Arabella Fermor, one of the celebrated beauties of the day. The Fermors had been settled for generations at Tusmore, in Oxfordshire, and Arabella was the fourth child of Henry, the proprietor of the place, and of Alice his wife. As both she and Lord Petre

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 142.

were prominent members in Roman Catholic society, and as the incident provoked dissensions in a circle which it was expedient to keep closely united, friends on either side were zealous in endeavouring to effect a reconciliation. Among the most active of these peacemakers was Pope's friend Caryll, to whom the happy thought occurred that the best way of ending the quarrel was by the application of a little good-tempered raillery. He accordingly suggested to Pope to write a poem on the subject, and the latter undertook the enterprise. If we may judge from an expression in one of his letters, the first sketch of the 'Rape of the Lock' was completed in August, 1711, in which month it was sent to Caryll in MS. by the poet, who seems at that time to have thought of publishing it separately.[1] Ultimately it was inserted, with other poems by different hands, in Lintot's Miscellany, and published in May, 1712. The motto taken from an epigram of Martial, which also suggested the name of the heroine, seemed to imply that the poem was written at the request of Miss Fermor.[2] This, however, could not have been the case, at least directly, as it is plain from the correspondence with Caryll, that, at the date of the first publication, Pope had no personal acquaintance with that lady.

The poem, as printed in the Miscellany, consisted of two cantos, containing in all three hundred and thirty-four lines. It opened with the eighteen lines that stand first in the final version; passed on to the passage at the beginning of what is now the second canto, describing Belinda's preeminence among the gay company on the Thames; and proceeded as far as the forty-sixth line. Then came the description of Hampton Court, which now stands at the opening of the third canto, down to the line, 'And the long labours of the toilet cease,' after which the episode of the coffee-drinking prepared the way for the rape of the lock which is given as in the later edition, without

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of August 2, 1711.

[2] "Nolueram, Belinda tuos violare capillos;
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis."

of course the intervention of the Sylphs. This closed the first canto. The second began with what is now the opening line of the fourth canto, and after verse ten went on to verse ninety-four in the text as it stands, from which point, save for the addition of Clarissa's speech (Canto v. 9–34), and a few allusions to the Sylphs and Gnomes, the text is the same as at present.

In spite of Pope's own statement to Spence, it does not appear that the 'Rape of the Lock' quite answered Caryll's hopes as an instrument of reconciliation. "Sir Plume," writes Pope to his friend on November 8, 1712, "blusters, I hear; nay, the celebrated lady herself is offended, and, which is stranger, not at herself, but me. Is not this enough to make a writer never be tender of another's character or fame?" Probably, if 'the celebrated lady' had been left to herself, she would have read the poem without offence, but the keen eye of scandal detected one or two passages with a double meaning, which passed the bounds of decency, and candid friends no doubt told Belinda what was being said. Under these circumstances she was not unnaturally offended. Nor was Sir Plume's displeasure surprising, but as the lines describing his negociation with the Baron are perhaps the most delightfully festive in the poem, it is not to be supposed that his injuries excited much compassion.

Perhaps, inserted as it was in a Miscellany, the poem in its original form did not arouse the attention it deserved; no particular mention, at any rate, is made of its success in the correspondence between Caryll and the author. Meantime Pope fell in with 'Le Comte de Gabalis,' a book on the Mysteries of the Rosicrucians, written by the Abbé Villars, and perceived how vastly his work might be improved by the insertion of the machinery of the Sylphs. "The scheme of adding it," he told Spence, "was much liked and approved by several of my friends, and particularly by Dr. Garth, who, as he was one of the best-natured men in the world, was very fond of it."[1] The

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 195.

reference to Garth is evidently meant as a reflection on Addison, to whom Pope, according to his own account, imparted the design, expecting that it would be commended, but was astonished to find that the other disapproved of the alteration, saying that the poem as it stood was 'a delicious little thing' and *merum sal.* "Mr. Pope," says Warburton, "was shocked for his friend, and then first began to open his eyes to his character."[1] It is needless to add a word to what has been pointed out by many critics, that even if Addison ever gave the advice, the motive imputed to him by Pope probably existed only in the suspicious imagination of the latter.

In 1714, the 'Rape of the Lock' in its enlarged form was published separately. It now consisted of five cantos, containing in all seven hundred and ninety-four lines. Besides the machinery which made the largest part of the addition, the description of Belinda's toilet, of her voyage down the Thames to Hampton Court, of her game at ombre, and of the pedigree of her bodkin, were all inserted in the new version. The motto was altered in order that Miss Fermor might be dissociated from all necessary identity with Belinda;[2] and Pope took occasion in dedicating the poem to that lady to declare that most of the incidents of the poem were completely fanciful. "As to the following cantos," he says, "all the passages of these are as fabulous as the vision at the beginning, or the transformation at the end, except the loss of your hair, which I always mention with reverence. The human persons are as fictitious as the airy ones; and the character of Belinda, as it is now managed, resembles you in nothing but in beauty." In this sentence he perhaps intended to disarm the hostility of Sir Plume. Certain it is that this character was intended for Sir George Brown; that Thalestris was his sister Mrs. Morley; while the Baron was of course Lord Petre. Of these characters Lord Petre died at the early age of twenty-two in 1713, that

[1] Warburton's Edition of Pope's Works, 1760, vol. iv., p. 27.

[2] "A tonso est hoc nomen adepta capillo."—OVID.

is to say before the republication of the poem. He had previously married Miss Walmsley, a great heiress, by whom he had a posthumous son. Arabella Fermor married Francis Perkins, of Ufton Court, an old Elizabethan manor-house in the neighbourhood of Reading. Her husband died in 1736, and she herself only survived him till 1738. She seems to have been satisfied with the dedication, though the family never highly appreciated the honour that the poem conferred on it.

The public generally were delighted with the 'Rape of the Lock' in its new form. It was published on March 2, 1713-14: three thousand copies were sold in four days;[1] and it was immediately reprinted. About the same time Pope wrote the 'Key to the Lock,' or a Treatise proving beyond all contradiction the dangerous tendency of a late poem entitled 'The Rape of the Lock,' to government and religion, by 'Esdras Barnevelt Apoth.' This *jeu d'esprit*, which explained the Lock to be the Barrier Treaty, Belinda to be Queen Anne, and the other characters in the poem to be leading personages of the day, was not published till 1715. In 1717 'The Rape of the Lock' was republished in the quarto volume of Pope's collected poems, when a considerable addition was made to the last canto in the speech of Clarissa, which was doubtless inserted with a view to meet the objection that the poem was deficient in moral. This criticism was perhaps never felt to carry much weight. The general reader, whose fancy, taste, and reason were all perfectly satisfied with the exquisite entertainment provided for him, was little inclined to be austere in his judgment, and what was the unanimous opinion of Pope's contemporaries has continued to prevail among the best judges of every generation down to our own time. 'The Rape of the Lock' is the poem immediately associated in every man's mind with the name of Pope, and the pleasure with which it is read in the reign of Queen

[1] Pope to Caryll, March 12, 1714.

Victoria is the same in kind as that with which it was read in the reign of Queen Anne.

Of the sources of this pleasure various accounts have been given, all more or less just, though the delicate combination of the many elements that constitute the life of the whole is perhaps beyond the reach of analysis. Johnson seems to derive its charm entirely from the machinery, as though it came from the novelty of the invention that substituted the interference of the Sylphs in human affairs for that of the heathen deities. Hazlitt, with more discrimination, places it rather in the *atmosphere* of the poem as a whole, the effect of which he describes with great happiness:

> "It is," says he, "the most exquisite specimen of filagree work ever invented. It is made of gauze and silver spangles. The most glittering appearance is given to everything—to paste, pomatum, billets-doux, and patches. Airs, languid airs, breathe around; the atmosphere is perfumed with affectation. A toilet is described with the solemnity of an altar raised to the goddess of vanity, and the history of a silver bodkin is given with all the pomp of heraldry. No pains are spared, no profusion of ornament, no splendour of poetic diction to set off the meanest things. The balance between the concealed irony and the assumed gravity is as nicely trimmed as the balance of power in Europe. The little is made great and the great little. You hardly know whether to laugh or weep. It is the triumph of insignificance, the apotheosis of foppery and folly. It is the perfection of the mock-heroic." [1]

This is admirable and suggestive, yet, like Johnson's criticism, it scarcely conveys an idea of the supreme art of the poem, because it fails to examine its *construction*, and therefore to impress the reader with a sense of the executive difficulties which Pope had to overcome before he could produce that effect of nature and propriety which characterises the entire performance. It still remains for criticism to point out the exact nature of Pope's design, and to show by comparison how incomparably superior it is to the other European masterpieces of the same class.

The most rudimentary requisite of a mock-heroic poem is, that it should mock the epic. The ordinary course of nature

[1] Hazlitt, 'Lectures on the English Poets,' pp. 142, 143 (Edition of 1819).

must be inverted. The little—to use Hazlitt's expression—must be made great and the great little. A trivial action must be represented in a grand manner. Hence composition of this class necessarily involves parody, and in that simple form mock-heroic first appears in 'The Battle of the Frogs and the Mice.'

In order, however, to produce a mock-heroic poem of the first class, the presence of a much more subtle element is required. It is necessary not only that the cause of the action should be small, but that the consequences of the action should be out of all proportion to the cause. Small events must set in motion great human passions. Where this condition is satisfied it is evident that the element of satire must be introduced, while a certain moral sentiment, diffused rather than didactically expressed, must justify the expenditure of elaborate art on an apparently trivial subject. These are the fundamental requirements of the mock-heroic *subject*, and this being judiciously selected, the successful execution of it must depend mainly on the invention shown in the management of the machinery, the introduction of appropriate and varied episodes, and the elevation of the language. To provide for the conduct of an extended action of a trivial kind, after the manner of the real epic, is the greatest difficulty with which the mock-heroic poet has to contend. It is easy for him to produce a feeling of paradoxical pleasure by the grand announcement of his subject, and perhaps by some happily invented turn of the machinery, but his powers are not really tested till he has to deal with the antagonism and adventure of various agents, which recall the exploits of the 'Iliad' or the 'Æneid,' but which, unlike these, are not to be found in the nature of the action itself. So formidable is this difficulty that no mock-heroic poem in existence has completely surmounted it. In all of them there are one or more weak places, and the relative position of the 'Rape of the Lock' can be best ascertained by comparing the methods employed by Pope in executing his task with those of his most celebrated predecessors. Before the 'Rape of the Lock' there are only three mock-heroic

poems which demand notice, 'La Secchia Rapita,' 'Le Lutrin,' and 'The Dispensary.'

'La Secchia Rapita,' by Alessandro Tassoni, a poem describing the war between Modena and Bologna in 1249, in which Enzo, King of Sardinia, was taken prisoner by the Bolognese, was published in 1622, and is generally considered to be the first modern example of mock-heroic. The author himself lays claim to the invention, saying 'that the novelty of the composition lay in the mixture in one poem of the heroic, the comic, and the satiric.'[1] It cannot, however, be said that the 'Rape of the Bucket' displays any remarkable amount of poetic invention. As far as regards the mixture of the heroic and the comic, Tassoni had been anticipated both by Pulci and Ariosto, the only difference being that, whereas the two former introduced a comic element into the romances of chivalry, Tassoni, adopting a more classical form, employed his irony on a historic subject, and introduced the machinery of the Pagan deities. Both the 'Morgante Maggiore' and the 'Orlando Furioso' exhibit that truly Italian spirit which ridicules the extravagant and romantic by pretending a naïve belief in the marvels they describe, while at the same time incidental touches let it be seen that the poets are laughing in their sleeve at their own story. They follow the bent of the national genius for burlesque, which leads to making the great little rather than the little great. Tassoni differs from his predecessors in this single respect, which is indeed of the essence of a genuine mock-heroic poem, that he perceives the necessity of showing 'what dire events from trivial causes spring.' Treating history with some poetical licence, he pretends that the real cause of the war between Modena and Bologna was the carrying off of a bucket, still preserved among the antiquities of the former city, and relates with true comic humour the incidents of the midnight raid that led to the capture of this trophy, the solemn embassy of

[1] Muratori, 'Vita di Tassoni,' p. 81.

the Bolognese for its recovery, and the council of the Gods convened to deliberate on the approaching war. The description of the deities of Olympus with the costumes and manners of the magnates of the poet's own period is admirably vivacious, and is the best part of the work.

Unfortunately at this point Tassoni had exhausted all the elements of mock-heroic which were really comprised within his subject. The war between the two cities was a serious business, and to amuse his readers through the remaining ten cantos the poet was obliged to ridicule his own contemporaries. As, with the exception of Marino, none of these were persons of any distinction, the greater part of 'La Secchia Rapita' has now become pointless and dull. To satirise the internecine warfare which had done so much to destroy the liberties of the different Italian States was not in itself an unworthy object, but it was impossible to execute such a design in a mock-heroic poem of which the action was laid as far back as the thirteenth century.

Tassoni's conceptions of the requirements of the mock-heroic style are very rudimentary. When he speaks of having first introduced into poetry 'a mixture of the heroic, the comic, and the satiric,' it must not be understood that these elements are blended in him as they are in Boileau and Pope. His way is to pursue in detail through some stanzas a ludicrous episode, such as the description of the night alarm of the Modenese in the first canto, and the debate of the Gods in the second, and then to diversify it with a perfectly serious account of a battle. Sometimes he enlivens these heavy passages by the introduction of some glutton, or coward, or bad poet, being personages of his time against whom he desires to discharge his malice, but for whole stanzas together he seems to write in a perfectly serious mood. So too in his language and versification. Of the sustained irony of 'Le Lutrin' the poem shows no trace: this purely classical manner would indeed have been foreign to the genius of the Italian language. He sometimes seeks to provoke surprise and laughter by accumulations of serious and

even beautiful images with a ridiculous climax, as in the following stanza :—

> " Dal celeste Monton già il sole uscito
> Saettava coi rai le nubi algenti ;
> Parean stellati i campi e 'l ciel fiorito
> E su 'l tranquillo mar dormieno i venti ;
> Sol zefiro ondeggiar facea su 'l lito
> L'erbetta molle e i fior vaghi e ridenti,
> E s'udian gli usignoli al primo albore
> E gli asini cantar versi d'amore." [1]

But paradoxes of this kind are far from being frequent in his verse, which, as has been said, is almost as often serious as comic, and which even admits passages of fanciful and delicate beauty. As he belongs to what may be called the romantic school of mock-heroic poetry, he scarcely relies at all on those parodies of the ancients which form so prominent a feature in the works of his successors.

'Le Lutrin' of Boileau is a far more artistic work. The account which the author himself gave of the origin of the poem in the preface which he published with the edition of 1674 is interesting from the illustration it affords of the character of this kind of composition.

"The occasion which gave rise to this poem," says he, "was odd enough. Not long ago in a company where I was the conversation fell upon heroic poetry. Each spoke of it according to his lights. As for myself, when asked my opinion, I maintained what I have advanced in my 'Art of Poetry,' that a heroic poem to be excellent must be lightly charged with matter, which must be sustained and extended by invention. The point was vehemently contested. We grew very warm ; but after many reasons had been alleged for and against, the usual result in all disputes of this kind happened, namely, that neither the one nor the other was convinced, and each remained steadfast in his own opinion. The heat of the dispute being passed, we spoke of other things, and began to laugh at the manner in which we had grown warm over a question of such trifling importance. We moralised much on the folly of men who pass nearly all their life in making serious matters of the merest trifles, and who often make of an indifferent matter a considerable business. By way of illustration a provincial related a famous quarrel which had formerly arisen in a little church of his province between the treasurer and the precentor, who are the two chief

[1] Tassoni, 'La Secchia Rapita,' canto i, 6.

dignitaries of this church, to determine whether a reading-desk shc be placed in one spot or in another. The story was considered pleas Thereupon one of the wits of the company, who could not so ea forget the dispute, asked me whether I, who was for having so li matter in a heroic poem, would undertake to make one on a quarre little burdened with incident as the one in this church. This caus shout of laughter in the company, and I could not refrain from laugh like the others, not thinking, in fact, that I should ever be able to pr myself as good as my word. Nevertheless, in the evening, finding self at leisure, I thought the thing over, and having formed a gen conception of the pleasantry which I am going to put before the rea I made twenty verses of it, which I showed my friends. This ginning pleased them much. The pleasure that I saw they took in made me make twenty more; and so from one twenty verses to anotl I have at last pushed the work on to nearly nine hundred."

In a later preface he admitted, what he had previou sought to conceal, that the quarrel had really taken place the Chapter of La Sainte Chapelle: he added, however, t this was the only incident in the poem that was founded fact. It is indeed sufficiently clear that the various episoc as well as the characters, are purely imaginary in respect their treatment, though it would seem that most of the act had some counterpart in reality. In all the early editi Boileau called 'Le Lutrin' a *heroic* poem; in 1704 he sty it a heroic-comic poem. It was at first published with o four cantos: the two last cantos were not added till 1683.

Comparing 'Le Lutrin' with 'La Secchia Rapita,' we see t the single element they have in common is the celebration a trivial action that produced consequences out of all prop tion to its importance. In almost every other respect conception of mock-heroic formed by the two poets is co pletely different. Tassoni took his subject from the rem past: Boileau celebrated an incident that was in everybod recollection. The former to some extent follows the course history; he is exact in his geographical descriptions; min in his topography; while many of his stanzas make attempt at the ludicrous, Boileau is ironical in every verse his first five cantos. The Italian poet has but crude conc tions of the functions of parody whereby he simply strives

make the great little, travestying Homer, for instance, in his description of the Council of the Gods, and in the ludicrous anatomy of his battle-pieces; Boiardo in the extravagance of his romantic episodes; and Marino in the affectations of his language. Boileau on the other hand constructed his poem with the greatest elaboration, so as to give it, in point of action, character, machinery, and language, a superficial resemblance to a real epic poem.

In all these respects the construction of 'Le Lutrin' is on the whole singularly ingenious. The action from the entrance of Discord down to the battle between the canons and the choristers is well-sustained; the incidents generally are necessary and appropriate, and seem to arise naturally out of the progress of the events. The characters are justly discriminated, and each of them plays his part in the action with an elevation of spirit worthy of the heroes of Virgil. Though the machinery is the weakest part of the construction, the supernatural agents being merely abstractions, the figure of Discord at least is painted with much vividness and power; and so as greatly to heighten the satire of the poem. The language throughout is admirably graceful and lofty. Boileau specially excels in the accumulation of strong yet delicate words, by which in a few strokes he raises a ridiculous image in the reader's mind. The picture of the Treasurer in bed is unsurpassed in poetry of this kind:

"Dans le réduit obscur d'une alcôve enfoncée
S'élève un lit de plume à grands frais amassée:
Quatre rideaux pompeux, par un double contour,
En défendent l'entrée à la clarté du jour.
Là, parmi les douceurs d'un tranquille silence,
Règne sur le duvet une heureuse indolence.
C'est là que le prélat, muni d'un déjeûner,
Dormant d'un léger somme, attendoit le dîner.
La jeunesse en sa fleur brille sur son visage:
Son menton sur son sein descend à double étage;
Et son corps, ramassé dans sa courte grosseur,
Fait gémir les coussins sous sa molle épaisseur."[1]

[1] 'Le Lutrin,' chant i.

How finely does the above description prepare the mind for the tremendous effect on this luxurious soul of Discord's energetic outburst, "Tu dors, prélat, tu dors!" All this portion of the poem is admirably worked up. Boileau seems to have put forth his whole powers in describing the passions raised in the breast of the fat, lazy, and proud ecclesiastic by the announcement of the usurpation of his authority:

> "Le prudent Gilotin, son aumonier fidèle,
> En vain par ses conseils sagement le rappelle;
> Lui montre le péril; que midi va sonner;
> Qu'il va faire, s'il sort, refroidir le dîner."[1]

The remonstrances of this sagacious counsellor are in the best vein of mock-heroic—

> "Quelle fureur, dit-il, quel aveugle caprice,
> Quand le dîner est prêt, vous appelle à l'office?
> De votre dignité soutenez mieux l'éclat;
> Est-ce pour travailler que vous êtes prélat?
> A quoi bon ce dégoût et ce zèle inutile?
> Est-il donc pour jeûner quatre temps ou vigile?
> Reprenez vos esprits, et souvenez-vous bien
> Qu'un dîner rechauffé ne valut jamais rien."

As a specimen of the battle-piece the description of the enormous law-book used by one of the ecclesiastical heroes as a missile is characteristic of Boileau's powers of picturesque imagery, and of his happy turn for parody—

> "À ces mots il saisit un vieil Infortiat,
> Grossi des visions d'Accurse et d'Alciat,
> Inutile ramas de gothique écriture,
> Dont quatre ais mal unis formoient la couverture,
> Entourée à demi d'un vieux parchemin noir,
> On pendoit à trois clous un reste de fermoir.
> Sur l'ais qui le soutient auprès d'un Avicenne
> Deux des plus forts mortels l'ébranleroient à peine:
> Le chanoine pourtant l'enlève sans effort,
> Et sur le couple pâle et déjà demi-mort,
> Fait tomber à deux mains l'effroyable tonnerre."[2]

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[1] 'Le Lutrin,' chant. i. [2] Ibid. chant v.

From these extracts it may be readily inferred that 'Le Lutrin' is strong in those elements of the mock-heroic that involve the satiric representation of human actions and the ludicrous travestie of real epic poetry. As a poem, however, it has grave defects. The machinery is commonplace. The deities introduced are all abstractions, for the description of whose persons and abodes little invention is required. Sometimes they are called into action improperly. Night, for instance, is made to intervene as a moral agent of the same class as Discord and Effeminacy, merely for the purpose of bringing an owl into La Sainte Chapelle to alarm the three champions of the Treasurer in their midnight enterprise to replace the reading-desk. This episode of the owl, ludicrous in itself, has absolutely no effect upon the course of the action. The conclusion of the poem is quite out of keeping with the first five cantos, being completely serious. It is indeed difficult to see why Boileau should not have ended in a mock-heroic vein, as he had his materials ready to his hand. The President De Lamoignon, celebrated in the sixth canto under the name of Ariste, is said to have decided that as the reading-desk had in old times only been placed before the precentor's seat for the convenience of that dignitary, it was not equitable that it should now be replaced there if he felt himself inconvenienced by it. In order however to satisfy the Treasurer, he persuaded the precentor to consent to the restoration of the offensive desk for a single day, the Treasurer on his side promising that it should be removed on the morrow. The solemnity of this decision contained comic matter enough for a fitting conclusion, but Boileau has filled his last canto exclusively with moral speeches between Justice and Piety and with compliments to the President. It is possible that he did not wish to implicate a person occupying so high a position as his friend in the ridicule attaching more or less to all the actors in the story. It must be added, however, that Boileau's sense of the requirements of mock-heroic does not seem to have been unerring. A curious lapse in this respect occurs at the very

opening of the poem, where, after announcing in a very lofty and solemn way the nature of his subject, he goes on to invoke the aid of the Muse—

> "Muse, redis-moi donc quelle ardeur de vengeance
> De ces hommes sacrés *rompit l'intelligence.*"

He thus abases the character of his heroes just where he ought, however ironically, to exalt it. The feeling of the moralist overpowers the instinct of the poet.

Of 'The Dispensary,' published in 1699, little need be said, though party passion gave it in its own day a great reputation, and helped it to run through many editions. The subject is the dispute that arose between the College of Physicians and the Company of Apothecaries concerning the gratuitous dispensation of drugs to the poor ordered by the former in 1687. Whether a great satirist could have imparted interest to such a subject is more than doubtful. It seems to violate the most elementary conditions of a mock-heroic poem, for there is nothing disproportionate between the cause of the action and its consequences. In any case Garth was utterly wanting in the gifts which alone could have made a poem of the kind permanently entertaining. His work shows learning, but neither invention, fancy, nor mock loftiness of diction. It can only claim to be remembered to-day through a few hints that it appears to have given to the author of the 'Dunciad.' Pope indeed, whether influenced by his friendship for the author, or by the opinion of the times, rated the poem much above its merits. He told Richardson that "there was hardly an alteration of the innumerable ones through every edition that was not for the better; and that he took Dr. Garth to be one of the few truly judicious authors."[1] The following is a fairly favourable specimen of Garth's mock-heroic manner:

> "Thus he—Thou scandal of great Pæan's art,
> At thy approach the springs of Nature start,

[1] 'Richardsoniana,' 1776, p. 195.

The nerves unbrace; nay, at the sight of thee
A scratch turns cancer, itch a leprosy.
Couldst thou propose that we, the friends of Fates,
Who fill churchyards, and who unpeople states,
Who baffle nature, and dispose of lives,
Whilst Russell as we please or starves or thrives,
Should e'er submit to their despotic will,
Who out of consolation scarce can kill?
The towering Alps shall sooner sink to vales,
And leeches in our glasses turn to whales;
Or Norwich trade in instruments of steel,
And Birmingham in stuffs and druggets deal;
Alleys at Wapping furnish us new modes,
And Monmouth Street Versailles with riding-hoods." [1]

The 'Rape of the Lock' stands as far above 'Le Lutrin' as the latter does above 'La Secchia Rapita.' If the French and Italian poems illustrate the truth of Boileau's principle that an heroic poem ought not to be burdened with much matter, but to be sustained by the poet's invention, they also show how hard a task it is for invention to surround a trivial subject with fitting matter of its own providing. I have already spoken of the difficulties with which Tassoni found himself confronted in consequence of the historic character of the action he celebrates; and I have said that Boileau fails in respect of the fancy and invention which give brilliancy to a mock-heroic atmosphere. In the conduct of the action in the 'Rape of the Lock,' on the other hand, all is consistent and of a piece. The action itself satisfies Boileau's preliminary condition better than either 'La Secchia Rapita,' or 'Le Lutrin,' since the only incidents of reality in the poem are the cutting off the lock, and the dissensions which this provoked. Though the beauties of the composition lie in a succession of episodes, each episode is really required as a stage on the road towards the culminating event. The vision in Belinda's dream foreshadows dimly the approaching calamity; the description of her toilet is necessary to raise the idea of her dazzling appearance in her voyage up the river; the voyage up the

[1] Garth, 'Dispensary,' canto iii.

river to bring her to Hampton Court; her victory in the game of ombre to heighten the effect of the subsequent catastrophe; the coffee-drinking to give the Baron the opportunity he desired. 'Le Lutrin' wants an ending. Boileau makes no attempt to relate the manner in which the quarrel between the Treasurer and Precentor was composed, and thus left his action incomplete. The conclusion of the 'Rape of the Lock' is not the least gay and festive part of a poem which from the first line to the last is buoyant with good humour.

"But trust the muse—she saw it upward rise,
Though marked by none but quick, poetic eyes:
(So Rome's great founder to the heavens withdrew,
To Proculus alone confessed in view.)
A sudden star it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The heavens bespangling with dishevelled light.
The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And pleased pursue its progress through the skies.
This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail with music its propitious ray;
This the bless'd lover shall for Venus take,
And send up vows from Rosamunda's lake;
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome."

The admirable taste and propriety which characterise the management of the machinery of the 'Rape of the Lock' are manifest to every reader of imagination; yet it is worth while, in considering how far the poem is strictly *mock*-heroic, to examine the most plausible objections brought against it by a critic whose hatred of the poet helped his natural acuteness to place in the strongest light the smallest speck that he could discover in the performance. In his "Remarks on the 'Rape of the Lock,'" published in 1728, Dennis says: "They (the ancient poets) always made their machines influence the actions of their poems; and some of those machines endeavoured to advance the action of their respective poem, and others of them

endeavoured to retard it." Pope's Sylphs (whom his critic delights to speak of as 'Hobgoblins' and 'Bugbears') do not fulfil this condition; "they neither prevent the danger of Belinda, nor promote it, nor retard it, unless perhaps it may be said for one moment, which is ridiculous." They are in fact, according to Dennis, contemptible creatures, of whom "he who calls himself their chief is only the keeper of a vile Iceland cur, and has not so much as the intendance of the lady's favourite lock which is the subject of the poem."

Of the first of these objections—and both seem to have made some impression on the public judgment—it may be said that even the gods in Homer cannot avert the inevitable, and that therefore it is not to be wondered at that beings with inferior powers, like the Sylphs, should be unable to save the lock. But in point of fact Pope did not introduce his machines with a view to influence the action of the poem, which was complete without them, but partly in order to point the satire by adding fresh dignity to the trifling details of which it was composed, and partly to heighten the beauty and brilliancy of the general effect. Few will deny that in the execution of this design he was perfectly successful. There needs but a comparison of the present text of the 'Rape of the Lock' with the original version to perceive what bright and fanciful ideas rose in the poet's mind in connection with the new machinery. The appearance of the Sylph in Belinda's dream, warning her of impending calamity; the vision driven out of her head by her billet-doux; the delightful description of the Sylphs attiring Belinda in her charms; "Betty praised for labours not her own;" the speech of Ariel in the cordage of the barge; the flutter and commotion of the airy ministers as the Baron approaches the lock with the extended scissors; all this helps to convert what was originally only an amusingly mock-heroic account of a single action, into an exquisitely delicate and extended satire on the fashionable frivolities of female life. The unity of the whole is admirably preserved by Belinda's sudden recollection, when too late, of the warning vision of the Sylph. As to Dennis's

apparently plausible objection that Ariel should have had charge of the lock rather than of the lap-dog, the obvious answer is that the Sylphs could not foresee the exact nature of the impending catastrophe, and that their chief fittingly assumed the guardianship of what the poet satirically suggests was then the most valued treasure of ladies of the period.

The style of the 'Rape of the Lock' is a happy compound of the best elements of burlesque in Tassoni's and Boileau's manner, with an epic loftiness which is all Pope's own. He is fond, like Tassoni, of producing ludicrous effects by the paradoxical union of the serious and comic. Boileau relies little on this kind of wit, and aims rather at parodying famous passages in the epic poets. Pope introduces both paradox and parody, but his great excellence lies in the propriety of the imagery and the diction by which he indicates the real proportions of the events and actors he is celebrating. What, for instance, can be more exquisitely poetical than the terrific punishments threatened to the Sylphs for neglect of duty?

> "Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
> His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
> Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins,
> Be stopped in vials or transfixed with pins;
> Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,
> Or wedged, whole ages, in a bodkin's eye:
> Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
> While clogged he beats his silken wings in vain;
> Or alum styptics with contracting pow'r
> Shrink his thin essence like a rivelled flow'r:
> Or, as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel
> The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
> In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
> And tremble at the sea that froths below."

The finest passage however in the whole of the 'Rape of the Lock' is undoubtedly the game at ombre, in which every turn of the play is described with scientific exactness and at the same time with epic loftiness. This episode was suggested by Vida's 'Scacchia Ludus,' which is in itself a masterpiece of ingenuity. In this poem Oceanus, having invited the gods to his marriage

with Tellus, entertains them with chess, a game hitherto unknown to them. Emptying the chessmen on the board he explains to them with admirable exactitude the rules of the game, and then sets Apollo to play against Mercury. The moves of either side are described in the most lucid manner, the description being enlivened by occasional comic touches. Thus, though the gods are strictly prohibited from assisting either by act, word, or look, Venus cannot refrain from frowning at Apollo, just as she sees him on the point of exposing himself to a check-mate, while Mars, who favours Mercury, is detected in the act of surreptitiously replacing some taken pieces on the board. Eventually, after a most even game, Mercury, by his superior cunning, proves the winner, and as a prize is presented with the rod which he ever afterwards carried. The following passage describing the familiar move by which a knight checks the king and castle at once will show the skilfulness of Vida's style:

"Dum vero peditum intentus Latonius heros
Cædibus instat atrox, equitemque per agmina versat
Vastatorem alæ piceæ, longe Arcada major
Ardor agit tacitis jamdudum invadere furtis
Magnum aliquid; peditumque ultra sæpe obvia transit
Agmina, cornipedem ducens in prælia lævum,
Qui regi insidias tendens huc vertitur, atque huc,
Per mediosque hostes impune infrenis oberrat.
Constitit, optataque diu statione potitus,
Letum intentabat pariter regique Elephantique,
Alæ qui dextro cornu turritus in auras
Attollens caput, ingenti se mole tenebat.
Delius ingemuit, clauso succurrere regi
Admonitus; namque indefensum in morte Elephantem
Linquere se videt, atque ambos non posse periclo
Eripere, et fatis urgeri cernit iniquis."

It will be acknowledged that no common ingenuity is required to excel this; yet few will deny that Pope has equalled Vida in the fidelity of description while infinitely surpassing him in loftiness of style in his narrative of the game of Ombre, which, as I am dwelling on the beauties of the 'Rape of the Lock,' I here, for the purposes of comparison, extract at length:

"Behold, four kings in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair queens whose hands sustain a flower,
The expressive emblem of their softer power;
Four knaves, in garb succinct, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand;
And party-coloured troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful nymph reviews her force with care:
'Let spades be trumps!' she said, and trumps they were.
Now move to war her sable matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.
Spadillio first, unconquerable lord!
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio forced to yield,
And marched a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto followed, but his fate more hard
Gained but one trump and one plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,
Puts forth one manly leg to sight revealed,
The rest his many-coloured robe concealed.
The rebel knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his manly rage.
E'en mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'erthrew,
And mowed down armies in the fights of Loo,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguished by the victor spade.
Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the Baron fate inclines the field.
His warlike Amazon her host invades,
Th' imperial consort of the crown of spades.
The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,
Spite of his haughty mien and barb'rous pride:
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs in state unwieldy spread;
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?
The Baron now his diamonds pours apace;
Th' embroidered King who shows but half his face,
And his refulgent Queen, with powers combined,
Of broken troops an easy conquest find.
Clubs, diamonds, hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.
Thus when dispersed a routed army runs
Of Asia's troops and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion different nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye;
The pierced battalions disunited fall
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance !) the Queen of Hearts.
At this the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look ;
She sees and trembles at the approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin and codille.
And now (as oft in some distempered state)
On one nice trick depends the general fate :
An Ace of Hearts steps forth : the King unseen
Lurked in her hand, and mourned his captive Queen :
He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
The nymph, exulting, fills with shouts the sky ;
The walls, and woods, and long canals reply."

In fine contrast to this pure epic style is the inimitably dicrous speech of Sir Plume, which gave so much offence to e original of that character :

"She said ; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs :
(Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane)
With earnest eyes and round unthinking face,
He first the snuff-box opened, then the case,
And thus broke out—'My Lord, why, what the devil !
Zounds ! damn the lock ! 'fore Gad, you must be civil !
Plague on't ! 'tis past a jest—nay prithee, pox !
Give her the hair'—he spoke, and rapped his box."

Even masterpieces have their weak points ; and the weakest oint in the 'Rape of the Lock' is obviously the battle etween the men and the ladies. It seems impossible in a mock-heroic poem to dispense with a combat of some kind, yet scarcely one poem of this class has mastered the difficulty which the necessity creates. The battle must be either real as in 'La Secchia Rapita,' in which case the poet departs from the true genius of burlesque, or else it must be invented, when it becomes infinitely difficult to discover comic details appropriate to the situation. Boileau has, perhaps, on the whole been most successful in this respect. The battle in 'Le Lutrin' is occasioned naturally by the meeting of the rival parties, and a kind of propriety is given to the weapons

used, by the proximity of a well-known bookseller's shop, which thus enables the poet to indulge in satirical side-strokes at contemporary poets. A structure so airy and delicate as the 'Rape of the Lock' could not have borne anything so brutal as real blows and wounds. Pope, therefore, is reduced to represent a kind of allegorical fight, in which the pleasantry is eked out, as far as may be, by puns, and double meanings. On this episode Dennis makes some of the few unanswerable criticisms in his 'Remarks.' Among other observations he says:—

"In the beginning of the next page the following lines are full of miserable pleasantry:

> "While through the press enraged Thalestris flies,
> And scatters death around from both her eyes,
> A beau and witling perished in the throng,
> One died in metaphor, and one in song,
> O cruel Nymph! a living death I bear,
> Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beneath the chair.
> A mournful glance, Sir Fopling upwards cast,
> Those eyes were made so killing!—was his last.

"So that here we have a real combat and a metaphorical dying, Now is not that, sir, very ludicrous?"

To this it can only be replied in the words of Johnson: "These are perhaps faults; but what are such faults to so much excellence?" The 'Rape of the Lock' is a triumphant illustration of the justice of the principles advocated in the 'Essay on Criticism.' In every line of the poem we feel the truth of the maxim, 'True wit is nature to advantage dressed.' Nature—the action, the manners, the characters of modern life—is always before the reader. On the other hand, the form in which Nature is presented is conceived in strict accordance with the rules of classical antiquity. Yet there is nothing slavish in the imitation: good sense regulates throughout the conduct of the action. In his machinery Pope is neither driven like Tassoni to employ obsolete Pagan mythology, nor like Boileau to resort to moral abstractions; by a supreme effort of invention he has made his supernatural agents credible to the modern imagination. Hence he has

successfully encountered all those difficulties in the way of the mock-heroic poet on which I have dwelt in the foregoing pages. A slight incident of social life has been made the basis of a well-connected epic narrative; the sayings and doings of persons belonging to existing society are invested with heroic dignity; the whole delicate creation breathes a justly diffused moral air, which saves it from the reproach of triviality, without making it obtrusively didactic. Pope has succeeded in embalming a fleeting episode of fashionable manners in a form which can perish only with the English language.

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE IN LONDON AND AT CHISWICK AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF 1714.

Changes produced by the Death of Queen Anne—Pope's first visit to Bath—His 'Farewell to London'—Removal to Chiswick—Quarrels with Curll and Cibber.

1714—1717.

THE 'Rape of the Lock' reflects in its gaiety and good-humour the comparatively peaceful condition of English society during the reign of Queen Anne. Everything then seemed to conspire to bring about that balance in political affairs without which party conflict inevitably degenerates into faction. The Tories had little reason to be dissatisfied with the situation. A monarch of the House of Stuart was on the throne: the Church was in safety: since the Queen's accession the party had exercised a powerful influence on public opinion, and during the last four years of her life they were in the possession of official power. Nor were the Whigs inclined to complain. The Revolution of 1688, though acquiesced in by the Tories, had been mainly the work of their rivals, who, knowing that the fruits of their labours had been secured by the Act of Settlement, could look forward with something like equanimity to the speedy recovery of power and place. Men of both parties combined, as we have seen, to celebrate the Peace of Utrecht, and to applaud the performance of 'Cato;' their names appeared side by side in the Miscellanies of the day; and they met harmoniously in the Clubs on the neutral ground of taste and literature. This fortunate equilibrium was destroyed, and the complexion of current English literature completely altered, by the accession of the House of Hanover in 1714.

The Queen died on the 1st of August in that year. One of the first consequences of the event in the world of letters was the dissolution of the Scriblerus Club, which, founded like Button's upon a literary-political basis, naturally collapsed when, of its important members, Oxford was sent to the Tower, Bolingbroke fled to France, and Swift retired to Ireland. On the other side many of the most prominent literary Whigs, and among them Addison and Steele, were summoned by the new Government from the discussion of questions of taste and literature to take part in the political conflict. The society at Button's consequently rapidly declined, and the proprietor of the coffee-house fell into such poverty that, when he died in 1719, he had to be buried at the expense of the parish. An inflamed feeling of bitterness and suspicion, spreading on all sides, interrupted the friendly intercourse between political opponents, and Pope found himself deprived of the company of all his old Club associates but Jervas, Gay, and Arbuthnot, the last of whom had now lost the emoluments he enjoyed during the reign of Anne as court physician. "This town," writes the poet to Caryll, in November or December, 1715, "is in so prodigious a ferment of politics, that I, who never meddled with any, am absolutely incapable of all conversation in it." Fortunately for him the subscription for his Translation of the Iliad had been completed before the death of the Queen. Henceforth, for many years, his history is confined to a steady progress towards the goal of his ambition, fame and independence, and to the quarrels in which he became involved on the road.

Personally he was but little affected by the political revolution. He came from Binfield and his translation to observe the course of events. "I could not but take a trip to London," he says to Caryll on August 16th, 1714, "on the death of the Queen, moved by the common curiosity of mankind, who leave their business to be looking on other men's." He tells his friend that he expects under the Act of Parliament which prevented Roman Catholics from keeping a horse of the value

of five pounds, to be deprived of one that Caryll had given him as a present. But nothing of the kind happened to him, and, after the rising of the Jacobites in 1715, he could afford to give all his sympathy to those of his fellow Catholics who suffered in consequence.

"As poor as I am," he says, "I would gladly relieve any distressed conscientious French refugee at this instant. What must my concern then be, when I perceive so many anxieties just now springing in those hearts which I have desired to find a place in, and such clouds of melancholy rising on those faces I have so long looked on with affection. . . I grieve with the old for so many additional inconveniences and chagrins, more than their small remains of life was to undergo; and with the young for so much of those gaieties and pleasures, the portion of youth, as they will by this means be deprived of."[1]

In the summer of 1714, before the death of the Queen, he had been the victim of those chronic headaches from which, as we see from Wycherley's letters, he had suffered as a boy, and which now affected his sight and prevented him from working at his translation.[2] It was doubtless to cure these, that, perhaps by the advice of Radcliffe, in the autumn of this year he paid his first visit to Bath.[3] Bath, which had long been the resort of fashionable patients, had since 1708 provided itself with its first Assembly-room, and, under the direction of Beau Nash, organised its institutions and amusements on a regular system. In his early letters to Teresa and Martha Blount Pope gives us some vivid glimpses of the fashions which had begun to prevail in the place. He describes the appearance of the ladies at their first morning bath:—

"I have experienced the utmost you can do in any colours; but all your movements, all your graceful steps, all your attitudes and postures deserve not half the glory you might here attain of a moving and easy behaviour in buckram; something betwixt swimming and walking."[4]

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[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of March 20, 1715-16.

[2] Pope to Caryll, July 25, 1714.

[3] Mr. Carruthers places Pope's first visit to Bath in 1715, but the allusions in the poet's letter of September [see Vol. IX. p. 247] to the taking of Barcelona show that it was in 1714.

[4] Letter to Teresa Blount of September [1714], Vol. IX. p. 247.

A contemporary observer, from whom Goldsmith has borrowed some of the materials of his 'Life of Beau Nash,' tells us that the ladies appeared in the bath attended by a woman who presented them with a little floating dish like a basin, in which the bather deposited a handkerchief, a nosegay, and sometimes a snuff-box.[1] Pope found plenty of entertainment in watching this and other customs of the town.

"If," he writes to Martha Blount, "variety of diversions and new objects be capable of driving our friends out of our minds, I have the best excuse imaginable for forgetting you: for I have slid I cannot tell how into all the amusements of the place: my whole day is shared by the pump-assemblies, the walks, the chocolate-houses, raffling-shops, plays, medleys, &c." [2]

His health was restored by the waters and the change of scene, which proved altogether so agreeable to him that for the rest of his life he rarely failed to pay a yearly visit to Bath. He returned to Binfield towards the end of October, prepared to push on with the notes of Homer and set the first volume forwards for the press.

Having done his part of this work, and finding himself for the moment at leisure, he published through Lintot in February, 1715, his 'Temple of Fame.' He says that the poem was written in 1711. The first mention of it occurs in the 'Spectator' of November 10, 1712, where Steele says: "Mr. Pope has enclosed for my perusal an admirable poem which I hope will shortly see the light." He seems to have intended to print it soon after 'Windsor Forest,' but eventually to have kept it back that it might obtain attention when the latter poem and the 'Rape of the Lock' had passed the meridian of their popularity.

As a composition the 'Temple of Fame' is not one of Pope's best works, but there are passages in it which are interesting, as being strongly coloured by the passions of the time, as where the poet speaks of the 'various news'—

[1] Warden's History of Bath, p. 350.
[2] Pope to Martha Blount of October 6 [1714].
[3] Pope to Caryll, December 21, 1712.

"Of turns of fortune, changes in the state,
The fall of fav'rites, projects of the great,
Of old mismanagements, taxations new;
All neither wholly false, nor wholly true."

The following lines also deserve notice, both for their vigour and as a picture of the general confusion of society:—

"Above, below, without, within, around,
Confused, unnumbered, multitudes are found,
Who pass, repass, advance, and glide away;
Hosts raised by fear, and phantoms of a day:
Astrologers that future fates foreshew,
Projectors, quacks, and lawyers not a few;
And priests and party-zealots, numerous bands,
With home-born lies and tales from foreign lands;
Each talked aloud or in some secret place,
And wild impatience stared in every face.
The flying rumours gathered as they rolled,
Scarce any tale was sooner heard than told;
And all who told it added something new,
And all who heard it made enlargements too;
In every ear it spread, on every tongue it grew."

The conclusion of the poem, too, is very significant, as showing the self-deceptive mood in which Pope was accustomed to view his own character, and which was to be so strangely illustrated in the autobiographical period of his declining years:—

"Nor fame I slight, nor for her favours call;
She comes unlooked for, if she comes at all.
But if the purchase cost so dear a price,
As soothing folly or exalting vice;
Oh! if the muse must flatter lawless sway,
And follow still when fortune leads the way;
Or if no basis bear my rising name,
But the fall'n ruins of another's fame;
Then teach me, heaven! to scorn the guilty bays;
Drive from my breast that wretched lust of praise;
Unblemished let me live, or die unknown;
Oh! grant an honest fame, or grant me none!"

The publication of the first volume of the Translation of the Iliad was delayed till June, 1715, and in the meantime, having some leisure on his hands, he allowed himself a

measure of relaxation after the severe mechanical labour he had undergone. Throughout this year he appears to have been much in the company of two gay young noblemen, the Earl of Warwick, Addison's future stepson, and the 'lively Hinchingbroke,' both of whom were addicted to the night frolics in the streets which were then fashionable.

"I sit up," says he to Caryll in April, 1715, "till one or two o'clock every night over Burgundy and Champagne, and am become so much a modern rake, that I shall be ashamed in a short time to be thought to do any sort of business. I must get the gout by drinking, as above said, purely for a fashionable pretence to sit still long enough to translate four books of Homer."

This affectation of festivity was contrary to his nature, as he confesses in the 'Farewell to London,' written in this year, and probably about this season—

"Still idle, with a busy air,
Deep whimsies to contrive;
The gayest valetudinaire,
Most thinking rake alive.

Solicitous for others' ends,
Though fond of dear repose;
Careless or drowsy with my friends,
And frolic with my foes.

Luxurious lobster nights, farewell,
For sober studious days,
And Burlington's delicious meal,
For salads, tarts, and pease.

Adieu to all, but Gay alone,
Whose soul, sincere and free,
Loves all mankind but flatters none,
And so may starve with me."

In August of the same year he made one of a riding party to Bath, the others being Jervas, Colonel Disney (known as 'the Duke'), and Arbuthnot, the last being in command, and not allowing any of them 'so much as a night-gown or slippers for the road.' Pope made a longer stay there than in the previous year, not returning to the Forest till nearly the middle

of October, but he did not derive so much benefit from the visit. The dissipations of the early part of the year, followed by the mechanical strain of daily translation, affected a system always easily deranged, and produced in him a state of high nervous irritability. In November or December, 1715, he gives Caryll a vivid account of his mental condition :—

"I should make you a very long and extraordinary apology for having been so long silent, if I were to tell you in what a wild, distracted, amused, harried state both my mind and body have been in ever since my coming to this town. A good deal of it is so odd that it would hardly find credit; and more so perplexed that it would move pity in you when you reflect how naturally people of my turn love quiet, and how much my present studies require ease. In a word, the world and I agree as ill as my soul and body, my appetites and constitution, my books and business. So that I am more splenetic than ever you knew me,—concerned for others, out of humour with myself, fearful of some things, wearied with all."

His constant calls to London on literary business now showed his family that Binfield was no longer a suitable home for him, and in April, 1716, they removed to Mawson's Buildings, a row of houses close to the river at Chiswick, "under the wing,' as the poet expresses it, 'of my Lord Burlington.' He left the Forest and his old friends in it with many regrets. "I parted," he says, "from honest Mr. Dancastle with tenderness, and from old Sir William Trumbull as from a venerable prophet, foretelling with lifted hands the miseries to come upon posterity which he was just going to be removed from."[1] To the former of the two persons here mentioned he writes soon after his settlement at Chiswick: "I have been here in a constant course of entertainment and visits ever since I saw you, which I partly delight in and partly am tired with; the common case in all pleasures. I have not dined at home these fifteen days, and perfectly regret the quiet indolence, silence, and sauntering that made up my whole life in Windsor Forest. I shall, therefore, infallibly be better company, and better pleased than

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of March 20, 1715-16.

ever you knew me, as soon as I can get under the shade of Priest Wood, whose trees I have yet some concern about."[1] Another letter to the same correspondent throws so pleasing a light on his past life in the Forest, and on that benevolence which was almost as strong a principle in his nature as his self-love, that it deserves to be transcribed at length :—

"I give you the trouble of this to recommend what needs no recommendation to you, an act of charity in this holy time. It is in behalf of the poor girl I formerly spoke to you of, and to whom you have been formerly charitable sometimes, Betty Fletcher. She is so deplorable an object, as well in regard of sickness and disability, as of poverty, that if, out of Mrs. Moore's beneficences of this kind, which are many and great, she would please to allow her any small matter, as a weekly salary, though never so little, it would help her necessities much more than any larger gifts at uncertain times. I know you will make this your request, since I make it mine ; and I almost hope you know me enough to be assured I would rather do this than ask it. But I am become like many other too covetous people, one of the poor of my parish, who have learned very much on the sudden, and very much against my will (which is just contrary this time to the Lord's will) that charity begins at home. However, I will promise you one thing, that is of consequence to any friend at this season, that I'll not beg or borrow of you myself, provided you will take some care of Betty Fletcher."[2]

The removal of the family to Chiswick, while it brought the poet into immediate touch with fashionable society, deprived him for that very reason of much of his literary leisure.

"That you may see," he writes to Caryll, "I have no common obstacles hitherto, besides the neighbourhood of your fair cousins, I have been indispensably obliged to pass some days at almost every house along the Thames—half my acquaintance being, upon the breaking up of the Parliament, become my neighbours. After some attendance on my Lord Burlington, I have been at the Duke of Shrewsbury's, Duke of Argyle's, Lady Rochester's, Lord Percival's, Mr. Stonor's, Lord Winchelsea's, Sir Godfrey Kneller's, who has made me a fine present of a picture, and Duchess Hamilton's. All these have indispensable claims to me, under penalty of the imputation of direct rudeness, living within two hours' sail of Chiswick. Then am I obliged to pass some days between my Lord Bathurst's, and three or

[1] Pope to Thomas Dancastle, Aug. 7, 1716.

[2] Letter from Pope to Thomas Dancastle of January 5, Vol. IX., p. 490.

four more on the Windsor side; thence to Mr. Dancastle, and my relat on Bagshot Heath. I am also promised three months ago to the Bis of Rochester for three days on the other side of the water." [1]

While he was thus extending at Chiswick his acquainta with the aristocracy, he gave the first indications of his fut wars with the Dunces. In 1716 Curll, a piratical booksel had obtained possession by some obscure means of the MS 'Court Poems'—verses which appear to have been written Lady M. W. Montagu, but which were published by Curl being the reputed work of 'the laudible translator of Hom In order to punish the bookseller for the outrage, Pope ministered to him an emetic, and afterwards published ' full and true Account of a Horrid and Barbarous Revenge Poison, on the Body of Edmund Curll." It appears so stra that he should have thought it worth while to boast of the f that some have supposed this narrative to have been a p fiction; but Curll himself speaks to the fact, and Pope writ to Caryll says: "I contrived to save a fellow a beating giving him a vomit, the history whereof has been transmit to posterity by a late Grub Street author." [2] The rage personalities was as strong in the society of that age as in own, and it seems that this dull satire on a contempti scoundrel amused the town; but it is a curious proof of way in which Pope's judgment was perverted by his spl that he should have thought it worth preserving among prose works.

Another train of incidents led to his life-long quarrel w Cibber. Of all the old associates of the Scriblerus Club only two whose company still remained to him were Gay a Arbuthnot. Gay had, since 1713, been one of his poeti dependants. Recognising Pope's rising genius, he had in t year dedicated to him his 'Rural Sports,' and in 1714 he l

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of August 6 [1717].

[2] Letter from Pope to Caryll of April 20 [1716]; and Curll's Preliminary Epistle to Pope in second volume of Mr. Pope's Li ary Correspondence, 1735. See 'Curlliad.'

published at his instigation the 'Shepherd's Week,' a set of pastorals intended to ridicule Ambrose Philips by representing the realities of rustic life, but which obtained popularity from the very simplicity they were designed to satirise. A necessitous writer, very little burdened with political principle, Gay had been introduced by Pope to Swift and Arbuthnot, through whose influence he was appointed, in June, 1714, Secretary to Lord Clarendon's embassy to Hanover, in hopes, doubtless, that be might be able to secure the favourable consideration of his future King. The Elector, however, received the advances of the Tories with coldness, and the death of Queen Anne brought the embassy to a sudden termination without any benefit to its Secretary. Gay, nevertheless, in November wrote a poetical 'Letter to a Lady occasioned by the Arrival of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales,' in which he openly avowed his expectations of a place, but having, unfortunately, just before dedicated his 'Shepherd's Week' to Lord Bolingbroke, his congratulations to the House of Brunswick were probably not regarded as very sincere.

He now produced a farce called "What d'ye Call It," for which Pope exerted himself with all his might to procure a full house and a favourable reception. The purpose of the piece was to present a farcical action under an appearance of seriousness, many passages in well-known tragedies being parodied in mock-heroic diction, while some serious and pathetic ballads—among others the well-known one beginning, "'Twas when the seas were roaring"—were introduced. The piece was first acted at Drury Lane Theatre on the 23rd of February, 1715, before a full house, including the Court, who came out of consideration for the compliment paid them in Gay's congratulatory letter. The uninstructed part of the audience at first received the play with gravity and even with tears, but when they perceived from the behaviour of the 'wits' that they were intended to laugh, they entered into the jest, and the 'What d'ye Call It' ran for eleven nights. Gay made about £100 through this success; much of which was owing

to Pope's friendly activity on his behalf. Some offence, how ever, was given by the parodies, of which there were sever on passages in 'Cato;' and Steele, who had a licence whic enabled him to control the management of Drury Lan Theatre, declared that if he had been in town the play shou not have been acted. 'A Complete Key' to the farce wa soon afterwards published—in which, says Pope, Theobald ha a hand—pointing out the original passages aimed at in th parodies. "The author," Gay wrote to Caryll, "with muc judgment and learning calls me a blockhead and Mr. Pope knave."[1]

Encouraged by this partial success, it seems to hav occurred to Gay that some personal raillery on Woodwar a learned but rather pedantic physician of the time, migh please the public taste. He carried out this idea in farce called 'Three Hours after Marriage,' which, beir not only personal but dull and obscure (the point being th two lovers of the Doctor's wife conceal themselves in h house, one in a mummy, the other in a crocodile belongin to him), was deservedly hissed by the audience at its fir performance in January, 1717. A pamphlet in verse calle 'The Confederates,' satirising the performance, and ascribin it to the co-operation of the three wits, Pope, Gay, an Arbuthnot, appeared almost immediately afterwards, so th much to his mortification, Pope, at the height of his fam found himself credited, though he seems to have had little to do with it,[2] with the part-paternity of a condemned play. Whi he was still sore at the mishap, Colley Cibber, playing in 'Th Rehearsal,' happened to make an impromptu allusion to th unlucky farce, saying that he had intended to introduce th two kings of Brentford, 'one of them in the shape of a mumm and t' other in that of a crocodile.' The audience laughed, bu

[1] Letter from Gay to Caryll of April [1715].

[2] Gay, in a letter to Pope, expresses his desire to assume the sole responsibility for the play, the id of which he allows that Pope di approved (Vol. VII., p. 418).

Pope, who was in the house, appeared (according to Cibber's account) behind the scenes, and abused the actor in unmeasured terms for his impertinence. Cibber's only reply was to assure the enraged poet that, so long as the play was acted, he should never fail to repeat the same words. He kept his promise, thus committing the first of that series of offences which, in the poet's vindictive memory, marked him down for elevation to the throne of Dulness when it was rendered vacant by the deposition of King Tibbald.

CHAPTER VII.

POPE'S RELATIONS WITH WOMEN.

Mrs. Nelson—'Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady'—Lady M. W. Montagu and the 'Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard'—Correspondence with Lady M. W. Montagu—Correspondence with Teresa and Martha Blount.

1708—1718.

THE publication later in the year—1717—of Pope's first volume of collected poems, including, as it did, the 'Elegy on the Unfortunate Lady,' the 'Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard,' and the poetical Epistles to the Blounts, and nearly coinciding in time with the most dramatic portion of the correspondence with the latter, and with the letters to Lady M. W. Montagu, brings us naturally to the consideration of the delicate and difficult question of Pope's relations with women. By some of his biographers these have been represented in the light most convenient for the purposes of romance. They have treated his poems and letters alike with sober seriousness, investing his character with the dark colours of seduction, and his life with the incidents of passion and melodrama. An examination of the alleged facts, in the dry light of dates and probability, will reduce the element of the marvellous in these legends to very modest limits, and will relieve Pope of some of the odium which has been too hastily attached to his reputation. In considering the whole question we must always bear three things in mind: his sensitive, fanciful, and romantic disposition; his love of mystification; and his inveterate habit of using every incident for the purposes of composition, whether in prose or verse. He himself has recorded his experience of the activity of his imagination in one of his letters from Binfield:—

"I believe," says he, "no mortal ever lived in such indolence and inactivity of body, though my mind be perpetually rambling—it no more knows whither than poor Adrian's did when he lay a-dying. Like a witch, whose carcass lies motionless on the floor, while she keeps her airy sabbaths, and enjoys a thousand imaginary entertainments abroad, in this world and in others, I seem to sleep in the midst of the hurry, even as you would swear a top stands still, when it is in the whirl of its giddy motion. It is no figure, but a serious truth I tell thee, when I say that my days and nights are so much alike, so equally insensible of any moving power but fancy, that I have sometimes spoke of things in our family as truths and real accidents, which I only dreamt of; and again, when some things that actually happened came into my head, have thought, till I enquired, that I had only dreamed of them."[1]

Such was the temper of Pope at the period when his correspondence with the two Blounts begins, and that it was such when he was writing to Lady M. W. Montagu may be inferred from the elaborate romance of his letter, describing to her the death of John Hughes and Sarah Drew, as well as from the more or less ideal picture of Stanton Harcourt, which he professes to be painting from what was actually before him. His imagination craved for objects suitable for poetical composition, and as he was of an age when love is the most natural theme for verse, he delighted to exalt his female correspondents into divinities, and to make the realities associated with them the starting points for the free excursions of his fancy.

The first woman mentioned by him is a certain 'Sappho,' whom he speaks of to Cromwell as 'staying behind him in town,' though she might have been expected to follow him into the country. She is here described as 'a very orthodox lady,' and as 'an unmerciful virtuous dame!'[2] Since it would appear from the name given her that she was a poetess, there is good reason to suppose that the lady spoken of is Mrs. Nelson, who wrote a panegyric in verse on Pope's genius, which was published with his Pastorals in Tonson's 'Miscellany.' She was probably a member of the family of

[1] Pope to Caryll Junr., Dec. 5, 1712.

[2] Letter from Pope to Cromwell of March 18, 1708.

Nelson of Chaddleworth, near Newbury. The poet calls h in a letter to Caryll, 'a zealous Catholic,' citing her authori against some of the fanatical detractors of his 'Essay Criticism.'[1] The attractions she possessed must have be rather intellectual than physical, for in a subsequent letter Cromwell, Sappho's 'oratory and gesture' are contrasted di advantageously with the fine eyes of some other lady, perha Martha Blount.[2] In letters to Caryll of a later date Mi Nelson's name more than once reappears:[3] it is evident th there had been a quarrel between her and the poet; and h eulogistic verses are not included with those prefixed to t collected poems published in 1717. Their quarrel was caus by the conduct of the lady (who appears, from other eviden to have been a person of meddlesome and mischief-maki temper) in a matter closely connected with the composition the 'Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady,' a poe which, having, as usual, been treated by most of Pope's bi graphers as founded on historical matter of fact, has accum lated about itself a legend which presents one of the strange comedies in the history of literary criticism.

Soon after the publication of the volume containing t poem, Caryll writes to the author on July 16, 1717: "Pr in your next tell me who was the unfortunate lady you addr a copy of verses to;" and he repeats his question in a lett dated August 18, 1717. To neither enquiry did Pope repl but in a note to the poem published, with Pope's name, aft his death, Warburton says: "See the Duke of Buckinghan verses to a Lady designing to retire into a monastery, co pared with Mr. Pope's letters to several ladies, p. 206, quar edition. She seems to be the same person whose unfortuna death is the subject of this poem." This apparent clue to t identity of the person celebrated promptly set the inventio of the biographers to work, who built on the mystification

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of July 19, 1711.

[2] Letter from Pope to Cromwell of December 21, 1711.

[3] Letters from Pope to Caryll Jan. 8, 1712-13, and Feb. 1712-13

structure which for audacity of fiction is worthy of the poet himself. The first to pronounce upon the subject was one Ayre—known to his contemporaries as Squire Ayre, and by some supposed to be identical with Curll—who having, it is evident, no more knowledge of the facts than he could glean from the poem, proceeded to turn these into a circumstantial narrative, alleging that 'this young lady was of quality, had a very large fortune, and was in the eye of our discerning poet of great beauty.' He continues in the following strain:—

"But very young she contracted an acquaintance, and afterwards some degree of intimacy, with a young gentleman, who is only imagined, and, having settled her affections there, refused a match proposed to her by her uncle. Spies being set upon her, it was not long before her correspondence with her lover of lower degree was discovered, which, when taxed with by her uncle, she had too much truth and honour to deny. The uncle finding that she could not, nor would strive to withdraw her regard from him, after a little time forced her abroad, where she was received with all due respect to her quality, but kept from the sight or speech of anybody but the creatures of this severe guardian, so that it was impossible even for her lover to deliver a letter that might ever come to her hand, &c."[1]

The curiosity of the reader having been aroused by the seemingly historical character of this narrative, Sir John Hawkins at a later date appears upon the scene with some information obtained 'from a gentleman well known in the literary world,' who had been himself informed on the subject by 'a lady of quality.' From these distinguished but nameless authorities the world learned "that the unfortunate lady's name was Withinbury, corruptly pronounced Winbury; that she was in love with Pope, and would have married him; that her guardian, though she was deformed in her person, looking upon such a match as beneath her, sent her to a convent, and that a noose, and not a sword, put an end to her life."[2] The same circumstantial story is told by Warton, who turns the

[1] Ayre's 'Life of Pope,' vol. i., p. 76.

[2] See Vol. II., p. 198.

lady's name into Wainsbury — an apparent corruption of Hawkins's corruptly pronounced original.[1] These pathetic particulars, however, all paled before the splendour the romance acquired in the hands of Bowles:—

"It is in vain," says he gravely, "after the fruitless inquiry of Johnson and Warton, perhaps, to attempt further elucidation; but I should think it unpardonable not to mention what I have myself heard, though I cannot vouch for its truth. The story which was told to Condorcet by Voltaire, and by Condorcet to a gentleman of high birth and character, from whom I received it, is this:—that her attachment was not to Pope, or to any Englishman of inferior degree, but to a young French prince of the blood royal, Charles Emmanuel, Duke of Berry, whom in early youth she had met at the Court of France."[2]

The discovery of the Caryll correspondence by the late Mr. Dilke has destroyed these fantastic fictions, and has proved how slight is the basis of reality on which the poem rests. There was no attachment between the unfortunate lady and a mysterious lover princely or poetical, handsome or deformed; no confinement in a foreign convent; no suicide by sword or noose. There *was* a lady whom Pope held to be unfortunate, and a guardian whom he believed to be false to his trust, but it does not appear that the latter exercised any compulsion on his ward, and it is certain that the former died a natural death some years after the poem was published. The name of this lady,—and there is little doubt that she is the person addressed in the letter to which Pope refers in his note on the poem,—was Mrs. Weston, daughter of Joseph Gage, of Firle in Sussex, one of the prominent Roman Catholics of the day, and wife of John Weston, of Sutton in Surrey. She and her husband had quarrelled and lived apart, and it seems, from Pope's correspondence with Caryll, that Weston had thoughts of depriving his wife of their infant daughter.[3] Pope, always ardent in the cause of the injured, espoused Mrs. Weston's cause, with an eagerness that led to a

[1] Warton's edition of Pope's Works, vol. i., p. 336.

[2] Bowles' edition of Pope, vol. i., pp. xxxi., xxxii.

[3] Letter from Pope to Caryll of June 25, 1711.

coldness between himself and his half-sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Rackett, who were neighbours and friends of 'the tyrant,' as Weston is called in the correspondence.

"The unfortunate, of all people," he writes to Caryll on May 28, 1712, "are the most unfit to be left alone; yet we see the world generally takes care they shall be so, by abandoning them; whereas if we took a right prospect of human nature, the business and study of the happy and easy should be to divert and humour, as well as pity and comfort the distressed. I cannot therefore excuse some near allies of mine for their conduct of late towards this lady, which has given me a great deal of anger as well as sorrow. All I can say to you of them at present is, that they have not been my relations these two months."

'The false guardian of a charge too good' was Sir William Goring, of Burton in Sussex, whom Caryll, at Pope's instance, had urged to interfere on Mrs. Weston's behalf. Apparently the appeal had met with no success, for Pope writes to his friend:—

"He who put so valuable a present into so ill hands shall, I own to you, never have my good opinion, though he had that of all the world besides. God grant that he may never be my friend, and guard all my friends from such a guardian."[1]

It is to be presumed that, after the guardian refused to interfere, Mrs. Weston wrote to Pope the letter to which his reply is published,[2] announcing her intention of retiring into a convent. The sudden resolution, perhaps, recalled to the poet the verses of the Duke of Buckingham of which he speaks, and from this hint he may have evolved out of the excitement of his feelings the ideal situation conceived in the 'Elegy.' Though there is scarcely a line in the poem founded on the actual circumstances of the case, it is impossible to read the 'Elegy' without perceiving that it rests upon a basis of sincere emotion. The reality of the feeling has misled the critics into the belief that such an animated expression of feeling could only have been evoked by a series of facts corresponding with the story suggested in the poem. What the 'Elegy'

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of August 2, 1711. [2] Vol. X., p. 259.

really establishes, in spite of serious faults of taste by which it is disfigured, is Pope's right to be considered a creative poet of genuine pathetic power. No man could have given warmth and animation to such purely ideal conceptions as are found in this poem and in the 'Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard,' who was not possessed of vivid imagination and impassioned feeling.

Though the second of the two poems just mentioned is of the same order as the 'Elegy,' it must be judged somewhat differently. Like its companion, it shows in its concluding lines that the personal feelings of the poet are in close sympathy with those of the person he so dramatically imagines, and he himself tells us in his letter to Lady M. W. Montagu of June, 1717, how they are to be understood—

> "And sure if fate some future bard shall join
> In sad similitude of griefs to mine,
> Condemned whole years in absence to deplore
> And image charms he must behold no more;
> Such if there be, who loves so long, so well,
> Let him our sad, our tender story tell,
> The well-sung woes will soothe my pensive ghost;
> He best can paint them who shall feel them most."

In the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' obviously in allusion to the same feeling, he tells us:—

> "Once, and but once, his heedless youth was bit,
> And liked that dangerous thing, a female wit."

It would have been strange if it had been otherwise. Lady Mary was a year younger than the poet. She seems to have made his acquaintance some time in 1715, and it is evident that she then shared the admiration that English society lavished so freely on the author of the 'Essay on Criticism,' the 'Rape of the Lock,' and the 'Translation of the Iliad.' To Pope, on his side, her society was something different from anything he had yet known. The wittiest woman in England, and one of the most beautiful, the friend of all the leading statesmen of the day, and distinguished by every grace of high birth and breeding, her attentions excited his vanity and imagination.

But his affection was entirely of the head, not of the heart. He liked to believe himself gallantly in love, and, as usual, the prevalent feeling carried him to composition in verse and prose.

In the one case his instinct took him in a right direction. When Lady Mary in 1716 accompanied her husband on his embassy to Constantinople, Pope thought of what dramatic situation describing the separation of lovers would suit him to express the excitement of his own feelings. The supposed authentic letters of Heloise to Abelard furnished him with exactly the subject he required, and however the poem he founded on these may displease from the want of restraint in the expression of feminine emotion, it is unique in English literature for passionate eloquence of language and for melody of numbers. As his imagination dwelt upon the figure of Heloise in her devotion and her despair, as he pictured to himself the conflict in her soul between religious feeling and the memory of earthly passion, he forgot himself and poured his whole soul into his dramatic creation. The absent goddess in whose honour he began to write passed out of his mind, leaving there only the image of the lonely votaress in the 'deep solitudes and awful cells' of the Paraclete, with what true and profound sympathy appears in lines like these:—

"Of all affliction taught a lover yet
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget!
How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,
And love th' offender, yet detest th' offence?
How the dear object from the crime remove,
Or how distinguish penitence from love?
Unequal task! a passion to resign
For hearts so touched, so pierced, so lost as mine!
Ere such a soul regains its blissful state,
How often must it love, how often hate!
How often hope, despair, resent, regret,
Conceal, disdain, do all things but forget!
But let heav'n seize it, all at once 'tis fired;
Not touched, but rapt; not wakened, but inspired!
Oh come! oh teach me nature to subdue,
Renounce my love, my life, myself—and you.
Fill my fond heart with God alone, for He
Alone can rival, can succeed to thee."

These glowing verses breathe the genuine language passion, and it is easy to understand that an imagination wl had been dwelling in such lofty ideal regions should h returned from them warmed and heightened to communi something of their atmosphere to the quasi love-letters addre to a living correspondent. But in endeavouring to carry o prose a fiction which should have the appearance of reality sought to naturalize a foreign style of letter-writing of wl he did not understand the secret, and so fell into a mar which makes his correspondence with Lady M. W. Mont worthless, whether regarded as evidence of natural feelin as an example of literary composition.

His epistolary model was Voiture. Voiture's lett like the society of the Hôtel Rambouillet, of which t are the product, may be called the last chapter in literature of French chivalry. The social movement wl inspired them presents two specially remarkable featu in the first place it was the work of an aristocracy wl was fast losing all political power; in the second plac was mainly the work of women. Wasted by civil and r gious wars, and overborne by the progress of the centrali monarchical principle, the French nobility of the seventee century, leaving the old provincial scenes of their lost au rity, flocked to take part in the factions, the intrig and the amusements of the capital. Of the institut of Chivalry little remained to them but the ideal, an became their ambition to appropriate this as the distinguis badge of their caste. The task of adapting the ideas language of the Troubadours to modern circumstances naturally into feminine hands. In the refinement of man and language accomplished by Catherine de Vivonne in the of Richelieu, we see the legitimate development of all fine spiritual legislation of the Courts of Love which was business of the Countess of Champagne and her compan in the days of the Crusades. None but a woman of the r delicate tact and breeding could have blended into a s

code, the extravagance of Spanish chivalry, the worldly wisdom of the Italian Renaissance, the wit and gaiety of the French character, and whatever is characteristic in the letters of Voiture is merely the natural reflection of the conversation at the Hôtel Rambouillet. Their exquisite *urbanity* (a word which appears for the first time in French literature about this period), the art of insinuating more than is expressed, the grave irony of hyperbole, and the novel turns of compliment, are all elements of a social freemasonry. To attempt on such a foundation to form a literary style was an enterprise doomed to failure, and accordingly we find that even in the coteries of Mademoiselle de Scudéri, herself one of the charmed circle, and in the literature which she originated, there is already a strong element of the absurd. The bourgeois imitations of *Les Samedis* soon produced all those affectations of thought and language which are satirised in *Les Précieuses Ridicules*.

If this was the fate of "Preciosity" in France, it is easy to understand why it should have fared as it did when transplanted into England. The English aristocracy still retained much of their old territorial power, and with it their love of rural pursuits. A country squire might become the leader of the House of Commons, and the rusticity of Walpole, which was so strong a feature in his character, was by no means a bar to his predominance in courtly circles. As yet, though Queen Anne had been ruled by female favourites, the ladies of England had acquired little of the social influence which they subsequently exercised. Whatever improvement had been effected in manners was the work of masculine reformers like Addison and Steele; the politeness of the 'Spectator' is that of the club or coffee-house, not that of the drawing-room. So *naive* were well-born Englishwomen of this period that we find Mrs. Howard, when the quixotic Earl of Peterborough endeavoured to engage her in a correspondence of gallantry, turning in her perplexity to Gay, as a man of wit, for advice how to answer the strange proposal.[1]

[1] Suffolk Letters, vol. i., p. 122.

Nevertheless, the superior subtlety of French refinement necessarily acted on English taste, and the French romances of the seventeenth century had a considerable popularity on this side the Channel. But their clear delicacy mixed with a muddy stream; the gallantry of Mademoiselle de Scudéri was converted into the gallantry of Aphra Behn. Pope, brought up amid the lingering traditions of wit rendered fashionable by the Caroline dramatists, admired and sought to imitate the style of Voiture, without understanding it. No man ever excelled him in paying a compliment to a *man;* but when he seeks to make himself agreeable to a woman his style is detestable. It pleased him to think that he might raise himself in Lady Mary's favour by writing to her in the same strain of gallantry as Voiture had used in his letters to Julie de Rambouillet and Madame de Sablé. The greater part of his letters to her are accordingly composed in the most wearisome complimentary style, with a complete absence of news, and an attempt to find a witty turn for every sentence. In one of his earliest letters, for instance, he begins by saying:—

"I can say little to recommend the letters I am beginning to write to you but that they will be the most impartial representations of a free heart, and the truest copies you ever saw, though of a very mean original." "How often," he says in the same letter, "have I been quietly going to take possession of that tranquillity and indolence I had so long found in the country, when one evening of your conversation has spoiled me for a solitaire too! Books have lost their effect upon me; and I was convinced since I saw you, that there is something more powerful than philosophy, and since I heard you that there is one alive wiser than all the sages."[1]

Those who think that expressions of this kind imply a real attachment, should observe that Pope uses almost the same phrases in a letter to Judith Cowper: "You have spoiled him for a solitaire and a book all the days of his life."[2] The expression was considered too good not to be economised and kept for future use. Throughout the correspondence it is observable

[1] Letter from Pope to Lady M. W. Montagu of August 18, 1716.

[2] Letter from Pope to Judith Cowper, Vol. IX., p. 422.

that the commonplaces of letter-writers, or the casual remarks of Lady Mary, furnish him with materials for the most elaborate conceits. Thus, when he begs for an answer to his letter, he says:—

"For God's sake, madam, let not my correspondence be like a traffic with the grave, whence there is no return. Unless you write to me, my wishes must be like the poor papist's devotions to separate spirits, who, for all they know or hear from them, either may or may not be sensible of their addresses. None but your guardian angels can have you more constantly in mind than I; and if they have it is only because they can see you always. If ever you think of these fine young beaux of Heaven, I beg you to reflect, that you have just as much consolation from them as I at present have from you."[1]

When Lady Mary informs him of a visit she had paid to a shrine he at once finds a text for a compliment:

"For God's sake, madam, when you write to me, talk of yourself; there is nothing I so much desire to hear of: talk a great deal of yourself, that she who I always thought talked best may speak upon the best subject. The shrines and reliques you tell me of no way engage my curiosity; I had ten times rather go on pilgrimage to see your face, than St. John Baptist's head."[2]

And again,

"You tell me the pleasure of being nearer the sun has a great effect upon your health and spirits. You have turned my affections so far eastward, that I could almost be one of his worshippers; for I think the sun has more reason to be proud of raising your spirits, than of raising all the plants, and ripening all the minerals in the earth. It is my opinion, a reasonable man might gladly travel three or four thousand leagues to see your nature and your wit in their full perfection. What may we not expect from a creature that went out the most perfect in this part of the world, and is every day improving by the sun in the other."[3]

To all these rhapsodies Lady Mary replied in a vein that does honour to her breeding and judgment. She saw very well that Pope was writing in a bad style, vain, laboured, and

[1] Letter from Pope to Lady M. W. Montagu of [Oct., 1716]. Vol. IX., p. 357.

[2] Letter from Pope to Lady M. W. Montagu of [Nov., 1716], Vol. IX., p. 361.

[3] Letter from Pope to Lady M. W. Montagu of [June, 1717], Vol. IX., p. 381.

affected. But she also knew that she was corresponding with a man of genius, and however difficult it may have been for her to repress all exhibition of her sarcastic amusement, she does not, as a rule, attempt to check the extravagance of his romance. The opening of her first published letter to him is a model of good breeding:

"Perhaps you will laugh at me, for thanking you very gravely for all the obliging concern you express for me. It is certain that I may, if I please, take the fine things you say to me for wit and raillery, and it may be, it would be taking them right. But I never in my life was half so well disposed to believe you in earnest, as I am at present, and that distance which makes the continuation of your friendship improbable, has very much increased my faith in it."[1]

Pope, not perceiving the quiet humour which prompted this apparent seriousness, made it the text for fresh protestations:

"You do me justice in taking what I writ to you in the serious manner it was meant: it is the point upon which I can bear no suspicion, and in which above all, I desire to be thought serious: it would be the most vexatious of all tyranny if you should pretend to take for raillery, what is the mere disguise of a discontented heart, that is unwilling to make you as melancholy as itself; and for wit what is really only the natural overflowing and warmth of the same heart, as it is improved and awakened by an esteem for you; but since you tell me you believe me, I fancy my expressions have not at least been unfaithful to those thoughts to which I am sure they can never be equal."[2]

Lady Mary took no further notice of these extravagances, but continued to write Pope long letters full of admirable descriptions of the objects which interested her or of light and humorous reflections on the manners of the country. It was not till she was on the eve of returning to England that she gave her raillery free play in a parody of her correspondent's epitaph on the lovers struck by lightning. These verses illustrate very clearly the defects and limitations of her mind, and suggest the reasons of her ultimate rupture with Pope. Her intellect, with all the brightness of steel, had also its hardness; wit, taste, and breeding she possessed in abundance, but

[1] Letter from Lady M. W. Montagu to Pope of September 14, 1716.

[2] Letter from Pope to Lady M. W. Montagu, Vol. IX. p. 351.

she had little heart, and wanting natural sensibility, she had also a certain coarseness of moral perception.[1] Pope, on the contrary, was most susceptible to the ardent and generous feelings which are the foundation of romance, and, as has been already said, had cultivated them by imitating a literary style which he did not fully understand. Natures so essentially opposed might appreciate each other so long as intercourse was maintained by correspondence, but, when brought into familiar daily contact, were almost certain to disagree. There is, therefore, every reason to trust the account which Lady Mary gives of the origin of the quarrel, namely, "that at some ill-chosen time, when she least expected what romances call a declaration, he made such passionate love to her as, in spite of her utmost endeavours to be angry and look grave, provoked an immoderate fit of laughter, from which moment he became her implacable enemy."[2]

The history of Pope's relations with Martha and Teresa Blount is of a very different kind. These two ladies, members of the ancient Catholic family of Blount of Mapledurham, seem to have first become known to the poet through their grandfather Englefield of Whiteknights. Teresa was born in the same year as Pope; Martha was two years younger. The date at which the acquaintance began is uncertain. Martha Blount told Spence it was after the publication of the 'Essay on Criticism,'[3] but as she added that she was at the time a very little girl, her memory must have failed her, since in 1711 she would have been 20 years of age. It is probable that the three met as boy and girl, for the Catholic families in the neighbourhood of Windsor Forest were intimate with each other, but as Martha and her sister were educated in Paris, Pope would not have seen much of them till the period named in Spence's anecdote as the beginning of the

[1] This is shown very clearly in the shameful ballad she wrote about Mrs. Murray and her footman.

[2] Lady Louisa Stuart's 'Introductory Anecdotes' in Lady M. W. Montagu's Correspondence.

[3] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 356.

friendship. The first letter that he wrote to Martha, when sending the 'Rape of the Lock,' is dated May 25, 1712, after which there is an interval of silence till 1714, when the correspondence is resumed, and letters to herself or to her sister, or to the two jointly, become frequent. Before 1717 these are almost always written in a tone of gallantry, which, however, has nothing in common with the style adopted to Lady Mary. It is easy, playful, and comparatively natural, the written conversation, in short, of a man with female friends of his own age, whose manners and dispositions long acquaintance has enabled him completely to understand. He tells them of his journey to Bath; of his daily life in the place; of the progress of his translation; of his rides to Oxford: he sends them presents, at one time of fruit from Binfield, at another of the 'Grand Cyrus' by the Reading coach; or he offers to invest money for them in the South Sea Company. To Teresa he writes almost invariably in a tone of romantic raillery. She seems to have been of a lofty and adventurous spirit, to have had a strong vein of devotion, and to have affected superiority to the common-places of gallantry. Pope evidently admired her powers, but, to judge from his letters, he was more attracted by the gentle and retiring manners of Martha. Even in the earlier portion of their correspondence he abates his romantic manner, and writes to the latter with the seriousness of a friend and a confidant:

"They who can set a right value upon anything," he says in 1714–15, "will prize one tender well-meant word above all that ever made them laugh in their lives. If I did not think so of you, I should never have taken much pains to endeavour to please you by writing or anything else. Wit, I am sure, I want; at least in the degree that I see others have it, who would at all seasons alike be entertaining; but I would willingly have some qualities that may be (at some seasons) of more comfort to myself, and of more service to my friends."[1]

It is amusing to find him, at the same time that he is pouring forth his quasi-passionate vows to Lady Mary, writing as follows to Martha Blount:—

[1] Letter from Pope to Martha Blount, Vol. IX., p. 257.

"I am here studying ten hours a day, but thinking of you in spite of all the learned. The Epistle of Eloisa grows warm, and begins to have some breathings of the heart in it, which may make posterity think I was in love. I can scarce find in my heart to leave out the conclusion I once intended for it." [1]

In 1717 his tone is entirely altered. It becomes imploring, solemn, almost tragic; and there can be no doubt whatever of the sincerity of the feeling which dictates his words. The turning point in the correspondence is the death of his father, which took place on Wednesday, the 23rd October, 1717. On the following day he writes to Martha this brief and pathetic note:—"My poor Father died last night—Believe, since I do not forget you this moment, I never shall." [2] On the Sunday following (as there is every reason to believe) Martha Blount sent him a short note:—"My sister and I shall be at home all day. If any company come that you do not like, I'll go up into my room with you. I hope we shall see you." [3] It is not to the credit of human nature that this feeling and delicate invitation should have been described by one of Pope's biographers as "short, but very much to the purpose," and without any further evidence, have been taken as sufficient proof of his illicit relations with Martha Blount. Bowles had the whole of the Blount correspondence under his eyes, and a very small amount of reflection, setting aside common sense, would have shown him that Martha Blount's 'short note' could not possibly bear the construction which, to his lasting discredit, he has chosen to put upon it. What is plain is, that in the latter part of 1717 a somewhat serious difference occurred between Pope and Teresa, the result of which was to interrupt the harmony of their intercourse, and of which the cause, though it is nowhere explicitly stated in the correspondence, may with some probability be divined.

Mrs. Blount and her daughters had continued to live at Mapledurham since the death of her husband, Lister Blount, in 1710. Michael Blount, her son, married in 1715. This

[1] Letter from Pope to M. Blount [1716], Vol. IX., p. 264.

[2] Vol. IX., p. 279.

[3] *Ibid.*

event seems within a year to have caused the removal of the three ladies from the old home to which they were fondly attached, and which they now left in straitened circumstances. Pope felt a warm sympathy with the family. Writing to Caryll on March 20, 1715–16, of the distress among the Catholics produced by the recent rebellion, he says:—

"This brings into my mind one or other I love best, and among those the widow and fatherless, late of Mapledurham. As I am certain no people living had an earlier and truer sense of others' misfortunes, or a more generous resignation as to what might be their own, so I earnestly wish that whatever part they must bear of these may be rendered as supportable to them as it is in the power of any friend to make it. They are beforehand with us in being out of house and home by their brother's marriage; and I wish they may have not some cause already to look upon Mapledurham with such sort of melancholy as we may upon our own seats when we lose them. But I know you have prevented me in this thought, as you always will in anything that is good or generous."

In July, 1717, Mrs. Blount settled in London, in Bolton Street, to which address Pope's letter announcing his father's death was sent. The Blounts were the first friends he visited after a loss which, without question, he felt deeply; and for a short time the intercourse between him and the two sisters, particularly Teresa, seems to have been close and frequent. On the one side family bereavement, on the other pecuniary embarrassment, produced confidences which eventually caused both parties bitter vexation. Teresa, as far as we can judge from the correspondence, was in the wrong. I think it is evident that at this time Pope was contemplating marriage. By his father's death his mother, who was but a frail invalid, was thrown entirely upon his care, and with his own wretched health, and the responsibilities he had incurred in the 'Translation of Homer,' he no doubt felt that unaided he would scarcely be equal to his duties. Under these circumstances his thoughts turned naturally towards Martha Blount, but, keenly sensible of his personal deformity, he resolved in the first place to feel his way with caution. Such at least is the interpretation I am inclined to put upon the following

letter by the light of the incidents that ensued. 'You only,' says he, 'have had, as my friends, the privilege of knowing my unhappiness, and are therefore the only people whom my company must necessarily make melancholy.' He will therefore visit them less frequently than he had hitherto done. He winds up his letter in a vein of semi-gallantry, which however is meant to convey a more serious meaning:—

"Let me open my whole heart to you. I have sometimes found myself inclined to be in love with you, and as I have reason to know, from your temper and conduct, how miserably I should be used in that circumstance, it is worth my while to avoid it. It is enough to be disagreeable without adding food to it by constant slavery. *I have heard indeed of women that have had a kindness for men of my make.* . . I love you so well that I tell you the truth, and that has made me write this letter."[1]

On December 31, 1717, it is plain that there had been some misunderstanding between him and Teresa.

"It is really a great concern to me," he writes on that day, "that you mistook me so much this morning. I have sincerely an extreme esteem for you; and as you know I am distracted in one respect, for God's sake do not judge and try me by the methods of unreasonable people. Upon the faith of a man who thinks himself not dishonest, I mean no disrespect to you. I have been ever since so troubled by it that I could not help writing the minute I got home."

What the nature of this first mistake was may be inferred from a letter to Teresa of February 21, 1717–18, in which the complication of matters appears still more unfortunate:—

"I am too much out of order to trouble you with a long letter. But I desire to know what is your meaning, to resent my complying with your request, and endeavouring to serve you in the way you proposed, as if I had done you some great injury? You told me if such a thing was the secret of my heart, you should entirely forgive, and think well of me. I told it and find the contrary. You pretended so much generosity, as to offer your service on my behalf. The minute after you did me as ill an office as you could, in telling the party concerned it was all but an amusement, occasioned by my loss of another lady.

"You express yourself desirous of increasing your present income upon life. I proposed the only method I then could find, and you

[1] Letter from Pope to the Misses Blount, Vol. IX., p. 280.

encouraged me to proceed in it. When it was done you received it as if it were an affront; since when I find the very thing in the very manner you wished, and mention it to you, you do not think it worth an answer."

It is probable that the proposal which Teresa received 'as if it were an affront' is the one referred to in Pope's letter of December 31, when he tells her that she had completely mistaken his meaning. Desiring to approach the subject that lay nearest to his heart, he sought fully to gain Teresa's confidence, and finding that she wished to increase her income, he perhaps proposed to make her an annuity. Teresa, as is likely, rejected the offer with some resentment, as placing her under too open an obligation to Pope. He then took pains to learn from herself how he might gratify her wishes, without offending her pride, and she seems to have suggested to him a method which he afterwards adopted. Meantime, divining with a woman's wit what was passing in his thoughts, she led him on to bestow his confidence on her. This she may very well have done in good faith, as she could not have been insensible to the advantages of such a match for her sister on purely reasonable grounds. But haughty, impulsive, and perhaps resenting the obligation she had herself incurred, she had no sooner induced the poet to speak, than she allowed the idea of his deformity to overpower all other considerations, and treating his proposal as if it were a jest, she did him the ill turn he describes.

How deeply wounded Pope felt by such conduct we see from his letter of February 21st, but, to his honour, he did not permit the injury to make any difference in his generosity towards Teresa. On March 10th he executed a deed in her favour,[1] by which he agreed to pay her forty pounds a year for six years, on condition that she was not married during that

[1] Mr. Carruthers supposes the deed to have been executed in the previous March, but I think it is obvious that Pope could not have made any payment to Teresa before his letter of February 21, 1717–18. The date of the deed must therefore have been March 10, 1717–18.

period. He, however, naturally discontinued his visits to Bolton Street. Teresa, ashamed of her own conduct, appears to have written to him apologetically, begging him to let their intercourse be renewed on the old footing, and when he answered her that this would be 'unreasonable,' Martha seems to have added her entreaties. Pope's reply to their joint letter is full of feeling:—

"LADIES,—Pray think me sensible of your civility and good meaning, in asking me to come to you.

You will please to consider, that my coming or not is a thing indifferent to both of you. But God knows it is far otherwise to me with respect to one of you.

I scarce ever come but one of two things happens, which equally afflicts me to the soul: either I make her uneasy or I see her unkind.

If she has any tenderness, I can only give her every day trouble and melancholy. If she has none, the daily sight of so undeserved a coldness must wound me to the death.

It is forcing one of us to do a very hard and very unjust thing to the other.

My continuing to see you will, by turns, teaze all of us. My staying away can at worst be of ill consequence only to myself.

And if one of us is to be sacrificed, I believe we are all three agreed who shall be the person."[1]

In course of time a reconciliation was effected. Teresa seems to have asked Pope's pardon for her unreasonable conduct, and for some little time he continued to correspond with her on something like the old terms. But the wound she had inflicted was never completely healed. A groundwork of mistrust and suspicion was laid between them, and, as will afterwards appear, the poet came to imagine that he had cause to reckon Teresa among his bitterest enemies.

[1] Letter from Pope to the Misses Blount, Vol. IX., p. 283.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD.

Origin of the Translation—Difficulties of the Work—Quarrel with Addison—Comparison of Pope's Translation with Chapman's and Worsley's—Stanton Harcourt—Gay's 'Welcome from Greece.'

1713—1720.

MEANTIME Pope had been labouring steadily and manfully at the great work which was to establish his reputation, and to make his fortune. The Translation of the Iliad had been suggested to him by Sir W. Trumbull. In 1708 the poet sent to his friend his translation of the Episode of Sarpedon, which was published in the following year in Tonson's 'Miscellany.' In reply Trumbull wrote on April 9th, 1708:—

"I must say, and I do it with an old-fashioned sincerity, that I entirely approve of your translation of those pieces of Homer, both as to the versification and the true sense that shines through the whole; nay, I am confirmed in my former application to you, and give me leave to renew it upon this occasion, that you would proceed in translating that incomparable poet, to make him speak good English, to dress his admirable characters in your proper significant and expressive conceptions, and to make his works as useful and instructive to this degenerate age, as he was to our friend Horace, when he read him at Præneste: '*Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non*, &c.' I break off with that *quid non*, with which I confess I am charmed."

The proposals for the 'Translation' were issued in October, 1713, and were at once warmly received. On the 21st of that month Lord Lansdown writes to him: "I am pleased beyond measure with your design of translating Homer. The trials you have already made and published on some parts of that author have shown that you are equal to so great a task; and you may therefore depend upon the utmost services I can do

in promoting this work, or anything that may be for your service."[1]

In the following month Bishop Kennet, writing of Swift in his Diary, says: "Then he instructed a young nobleman that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a Papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, 'for which he must have them all subscribe; for,' says he, 'the author shall not begin to print till I have a thousand guineas for him.'" Swift's knowledge of Pope seems to have begun after the publication of 'Windsor Forest,' which he commends to Stella in his Journal of March 9, 1713, and the fine conclusion of which doubtless made him hope that he had secured a valuable pen for the service of the Tory party. Politics, however, in no way entered into the competition to subscribe towards the new work. Whig and Tory were equally zealous in their assistance, much to the poet's satisfaction:—

"May I venture, too," he writes to Caryll on June 29th of the following year, "without being thought guilty of affectation, to say that it was not the least of my designs in proposing this subscription to make some trial of my friends on all sides? I vow to you I am very happy in the search, contrary to most people who make trials; for I find I have at least six tory friends, three whig friends, and two Roman Catholic friends, with many others of each who will at least do me no harm."

It was fortunate for Pope, and speaks well for his character, that he had many ardent and influential friends like Swift, for the translation was designed on a magnificent scale, comprising six volumes, each to be published at a guinea. Caryll alone procured him thirty-eight subscribers, chiefly obtained, no doubt, among his Catholic acquaintances.

There were not wanting, however, many tongues to decry the enterprise:

"While I am engaged in the fight," says Pope to Caryll on May 1, 1714, "I find you are concerned how I shall be paid, and are soliciting

[1] Ruffhead's 'Life of Pope,' p. 180.

with all your might that I may not have the ill-fate of many discard generals, to be first envied and maligned, then perhaps praised, a lastly neglected. The former, the constant attendant upon all gr and laudable enterprises, I have already experienced. Some have s I am not a master in the Greek, who either are so themselves or not. If they are not, they cannot tell; and if they are, they can without having catechised me. But if they can read (for I know so critics can and others cannot) there are fairly lying before them a all the world some specimens of my translation from this author in Miscellanies,[1] which they are heartily welcome to. I have a encountered much malignity on the score of religion, some calling a papist and a tory, the latter because the heads of the party have b distinguishingly favourable to me; but why the former I can imagine, but that Mr. Caryll and Mr. E. Blount have laboured to se me. Others have styled me a whig, because I have been honoured w Mr. Jervas's good deeds, and of late with my Lord Halifax's patronag

Others there were who, while duly appreciating Pop genius, were unwilling that such original powers should fettered by so mechanical a labour. Among these was L Oxford, who, according to Spence, "was always dissuadi him from engaging in that work. He used to complim Pope by saying 'that so good a writer ought not to be translator.'"[2]

Pope himself was perhaps of the same opinion. His inv tive powers were at this period fully developed, and his ext ordinary artistic success in 'The Rape of the Lock' might w have tempted him to proceed on the path of original com sition. But a motive stronger than vanity or inclinat determined him on his new enterprise—necessity. His fat was now of an advanced age. His fortune, never apparen very ample, was impaired by the insecurity of his investmer Owing to the difficulty Catholics experienced in placing th money, a considerable portion of the old man's savings l been invested in French securities, in the shape of annui granted by the Government of that country. These seem have been paid with great irregularity, and in October, 17

[1] 'The Episode of Sarpedon,' published in Tonson's Miscellany, 1709, and the descriptions of the arrival of Ulysses in Ithaca, and the garden of Alcinous, published in Lint Miscellany of 1714.

[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 304.

an edict was issued reducing to four per cent. the interest upon the debts contracted by the French Government since the year 1702, while the annuities granted between 1702 and 1710 were reduced by a fourth. On June 23, 1713, Pope asked Caryll to find out, from the books of the Hôtel de Ville, "if our names be there inserted for 3030 livres at ten per cent. life rent on Sir Richard Cantillion's life, to begin Midsummer, 1705; and again in my father's name for my life, for 5,220 livres at ten per cent. also, to begin July, 1707." When the edict was published a report arose that all annuities granted after 1706 were to be reduced by one-half, but this provision applied only to annuities granted since 1710. Pope, believing the report, writes to Caryll: "I wish you could inform me by the most convenient opportunity how the matter stands as to the foreign affair. I suppose you had no concern in the *rentes viagères*. This misfortune will go near to ruin me, it being more especially my concern than my father's."[1] He was, therefore, most anxious to turn his poetical genius to account in making money for his family. Had he confined himself to original composition his profits would have been very inconsiderable, as may be seen from the amounts paid him by Lintot for his early poems:

		£	s.	d
19th February, 1711–12	Statius, First Book, Vertumnus and Pomona . .	16	2	6
21st March, 1711–12 .	First Edition, Rape . .	7	0	0
9th April, 1712 . .	To a Lady on presenting Voiture, Upon Silence, To the Author of a Poem called Successio . . .	3	16	6
23rd February, 1712 .	Windsor Forest . . .	32	5	5
23rd July, 1713 . .	Ode on St. Cecilia's Day .	15	0	0
20th February, 1713–14	Additions to the Rape . .	15	0	0
1 February, 1714–15 .	Temple of Fame . . .	32	5	0
31 April, 1715 . .	Key to the Lock . .	10	15	0
17 July, 1716 . .	Essay on Criticism . .	15	0	0[2]

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of January 9, 1713–14.

[2] Disraeli's 'Quarrels of Authors,' vol. i., p. 283.

A very different prospect of remuneration now opened the poet. The number of subscribers to the translation (am whom were the King and the Prince of Wales) was 1 hundred and seventy-five, and as many of these entered th names for more than one copy, he must have found him in anticipation the possessor of nearly, if not quite, £4,0 Yet the task before him was undoubtedly immense. He 1 no Greek scholar, and could only hope to master the sense his author by patient consultation of the metrical translati of his predecessors, Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby, the Fre versions of La Vallérie and Dacier, and the Latin one Eobanus Hessius.[1] The number of lines in the origi which he had to render was over fifteen thousand. Added this an explanation of the manners and customs of 1 Homeric age was required for the enlightenment of the 1 learned English reader. It is no wonder that at the out he felt overwhelmed with his responsibilities. "W terrible moments," said he afterwards to Spence, "does feel after one has engaged for a large work! In 1 beginning of my translating the Iliad, I wished anyb would hang me a hundred times. It sat so heavily on mind at first that I often used to dream of it, and do so times still."[2]

From his friends he received all the encouragement that needed. Addison himself had cordially supported the origi suggestion of Trumbull, and Pope says that it was in con quence of his advice that he resolved to face the labo His mind once made up he began to gain confidence:

"I must confess," he writes to Caryll on May 1, 1714, "the Gr fortification does not appear so formidable as it did, upon a ne approach; and I am almost apt to flatter myself that Homer secr seems inclined to correspond with me, in letting me into a good of his designs. There are indeed a sort of underling auxiliaries to difficulty of the work, called commentators and critics, who wo

[1] Johnson's Life of Pope.
[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 218.
[3] Preface to the Iliad.

frighten many people by their number and bulk. These lie entrenched in the ditches, and are secure only in the dirt they have heaped about them with great pains in the collecting it. But I think we have found a method of coming at the main works by a more speedy and gallant way than by mining under ground, that is, by using the poetical engines, wings, and flying thither over their heads."

He took the best way to success by letting his imagination monopolise the action he was about to describe in English verse:

"What can you expect," he writes to Jervas on July 28, 1714, "from a man who has not talked these five days? Who is withdrawing his thoughts as far as he can, from all the present world, its customs, and its manners, to be fully possessed and absorbed in the past. When people talk of going to church, I think of sacrifices and libations; when I see the parson, I address him as Chryses, priest of Apollo; and instead of the Lord's Prayer, I begin,—

'God of the silver bow, &c.'

While you in the world are concerned about the Protestant succession, I consider only how Menelaus may recover Helen, and the Trojan war be put to a speedy conclusion."

He told Spence that his method in translating was to take advantage of the first heat; and then to correct each book, first by the original text, then by other translations, and lastly to give it a reading for versification only. He would do thirty or forty verses before getting up, and proceeding leisurely with his task through the rest of the morning, he says that he gradually came to translate with pleasure.[1]

The portion of the work to which his scholarship made him unequal was the preparation of the notes of Eustathius, for the translation of which he employed the services of Broome, and afterwards of Jortin, then a young man at Cambridge, who in later life expressed some resentment against Pope for having accepted his work with approval, but never having asked to see him. To consult the books that he required he made a journey to Oxford in 1714, where he was very hospitably received. One of his hosts was Dr. Clarke, Fellow of

[1] Spence, 218.

All Souls, who showed an inclination to attempt his conversion. Pope stopped him.

"It is but a little while," said he, "I can enjoy your improving company here in Oxford, which we will not so misspend, as it would be doing, should we let it pass in talking of divinity. Neither would there be time for either of us half to explain ourselves, and at last you would be protestant Clarke, and I papist Pope."[1]

He was also at considerable pains to procure a correct map to illustrate his observations on the second Iliad, and complains loudly to Blount of "the negligence of the geographers in their maps of old Greece."[2] In spite of all his care over his own map, he did not avoid the error of discharging the Scamander into the Ægean instead of into the Hellespont. From a letter of Pope to Parnell in this year we see how much he felt himself in need of auxiliary scholarship. He had carried the latter from London to Binfield, and had made use of his knowledge of Greek to assist him in consulting the commentators on Homer.[3] Parnell made Pope a present of the 'Essay on Homer' which is prefixed to the 'Translation,' and no doubt smoothed many difficulties in the way of his translation. His company and his scholarship were alike agreeable to the poet, who writes to him with reference to his Essay, "You are a generous author, I a hackney scribbler; you are a Grecian, and bred at a University, I a poor Englishman of my own educating."[4] It was during this visit that the two friends rode over to Letcombe, a distance of thirty miles, to stay with Swift. So congenial did Pope find the society of the 'gay Archdeacon' that after introducing the latter to his friends at Mapledurham, he prevailed on him to accompany him on his visit to Bath in the autumn of the same year.

On his return from Bath to Binfield with renewed health and vigour, he resumed his labours of translation, and having concluded the first portion, went to the house of Jervas, in

[1] Ayre's 'Life of Pope,' vol. i. p. 22.

[2] Pope to Blount, Aug. 27, 1714.

[3] Letter to Parnell, 1714, Vol. VII. 452.

[4] Ibid.

London, to make arrangements for printing. In November he writes to Caryll:

"You will allow me to be a very busy fellow, when I tell you that I have been perpetually waiting upon the great and using no less solicitation to gain their opinion upon my Homer, than others at this time do to obtain preferments. As soon as I can collect all the objections of the two or three noble judges, and of the five or six best poets, I shall fly to Ladyholt, as a proper place to view and correct the whole for the last time, in which I shall have peculiar advantage from a daily conversation and consultation with so good a critic and friend as yourself." [1]

One of the 'noble judges' to whom he submitted his work was Halifax, and it must have been at the rehearsal that the amusing incident occurred which has been transferred by Johnson to his 'Life' from Spence's 'Anecdotes.' [2] Halifax appears to have almost immediately made advances to Pope, which Johnson, relying on the published answer sent by the latter, says were "received with sullen coldness." It is to be observed, however, that by the omission of the first sentence in the letter actually written, Pope gave his answer as published by himself a turn quite different from the original, which was evidently intended to be an acknowledgment of promised favours.[3] These favours never came, and it may very well be that Pope altered the form of his letter of thanks to make his own attitude suit better with the conduct of one whom, after such neglect, he conceived he might justly represent under the character of Bufo.

The promise of the visit to Ladyholt was fulfilled almost immediately, and after staying with Caryll till just before Christmas the poet returned with his host to Windsor Forest, putting up on the way to Binfield at the house of their common friend, Englefield, of Whiteknights. About this period he concluded his agreement with Lintot for the publication of his 'Translation of the Iliad.' He tells Caryll, "the book has employed more time in adjusting prelimi-

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll, Vol. VI., p. 221.

[2] Spence, p. 134.

[3] See Vol. X., p. 203.

naries than I expected."[1] The negotiation, when completed, left him no grounds for complaint. Bernard Lintot, who outbid Jacob Tonson in the competition, agreed to pay Pope £200 for each volume, and to supply copies to every subscriber, and to the poet's friends, free of charge. After making all allowances for payments to his literary assistants, Pope obtained for his translation between £5,000 and £6,000, a sum which, even in these days, would not be thought inconsiderable by the most popular of authors as remuneration for a single work, and which was then wholly unprecedented. Dryden received for his translation of Virgil at the most £1,300, and Tonson's agreement with him was not at the time thought illiberal. Lintot's spirited enterprise was exposed to rough weather through fraudulent competition. A pirated edition of the first four books was produced in Holland, to meet which he was obliged to withdraw the folio edition he had printed, and to produce the volume in duodecimo, but his confidence never failed him, and the new issue contained seven thousand five hundred copies, a standing proof of the vast increase in the number of readers since the time of the Revolution. It is satisfactory to find that the publisher's courage met with its due reward. Lintot made his fortune from the speculation, and both he and his son served in the office of High Sheriff of Sussex.[2]

The publication was looked for in March, 1715. In consequence, however, of the heavy rains, the sheets were long in drying, so that, much to Lintot's discontent, the first volume was not issued to subscribers till the 6th of June. Meantime, an attempt to damage the prospects of Pope's Translation was made by Thomas Burnet, son of the late Bishop of Salisbury, in a letter published on the 7th March, 1715, and called 'Homerides,' in which, under the name of Sir Iliad Doggrel,

[1] Letter to Caryll of Nov. 19, 1714.

[2] The best account of the circumstances attending the publication of the first volume of the 'Translation' is in Johnson's 'Life.' His informant was the younger Lintot.

he points out the madness of the poet's undertaking, and burlesques in the most stupid and pointless manner the first book of the Iliad. Such an attack can scarcely have disturbed Pope's peace of mind, but his surprise and displeasure were great on receiving from Lintot, two days after the issue to subscribers of his own volume, a similar translation by Tickell, which the publisher sent him 'to divert,' as he said, 'one hour.' This unexpected apparition seemed in every way intended to challenge comparison with Pope's work. It confined itself to a translation of the first book, and was dedicated to Halifax, as Pope's volume was to Congreve. The preface, however, explained the object of the publication:—

"I must inform the reader," said Tickell, "that when I began this first book I had some thoughts of translating the whole Iliad, but had the pleasure of being diverted from that design by finding that the work was fallen into a much abler hand. I would not therefore be thought to have any other view than to bespeak, if possible, the favour of the public to a translation of Homer's Odyssey, wherein I have already made some progress."

Tickell's volume, appearing as it did at such an inopportune oment, seems from the first to have been received within disapproval. "It is already condemned here," says Lintot on tending the volume, "and the malice and juggle at Button's is the conversation of those who have spare moments from politics."[1] Jervas mentions the satirical comments made on the preface:—

"It seems," says he, "it is published merely to show as a specimen of his ability for the Odyssey. Fortescue would have Gay publish a version of the first book of the Odyssey, and tell the world it is only to speak their approbation and favour for a translation of Statius, or any other poet."[2]

Politics, however, were the absorbing talk of the moment. The report of the Committee of Secrecy to enquire into the conduct of the late Ministry was read to the House of Commons on June 9th, and Lintot, who on the following day had

[1] Letter from Lintot to Pope of June 10, 1715.

[2] Letter from Jervas to Pope of June 12, 1715.

written pressing Pope by no means to retard him in the publication of Homer, was employed as the printer.

"The hurry I have been in," he writes to Pope on the 22nd June, "by the Report from the Committee of Secrecy, to get it published, has prevented the publication of Homer for the present till the noise be over: and those whom I expected to be very noisy on account of your translation are buried in politics."

In a letter to Jervas, which must have been written almost immediately afterwards, Pope writes: 'I have just received the Report, but have not yet had time to read any of it—Pray tell me if you hear anything said about Mr. Tickell's or my translation, if the town be not too much taken up with great affairs to take any notice of either.'[1] What the town said he soon afterwards learned from Gay, who wrote to him on July 8th:—

"I have just set down Sir Samuel Garth at the Opera. He bid me tell you that everybody is pleased with your translation, but a few at Button's; and that Sir Richard Steele told him that Mr. Addison said Tickell's translation was the best that ever was in any language. . . I am informed that at Button's your character is made very free with as to morals, &c., and Mr. Addison says, that your translation and Tickell's are both very well done, but that the latter has more of Homer."[2]

A whisper soon began to circulate that Tickell was not the real author of the Translation. Young, according to Pope's account, met him in the street, and expressed his surprise that, intimate as he was with Tickell, he had never heard a syllable of his employment in such a matter, and years afterwards Steele spoke in such a manner of Tickell as the *reputed* author, as showed that the gossip of the coffee-houses professed to detect Addison's hand in the work. It is, perhaps, not astonishing that, under such circumstances, Pope, considering the matter with a heated imagination, should have supposed that he had now evidence of the jealousy with which the author of 'Cato' regarded his poetical fame. He had never asso-

[1] Letter from Pope to Jervas, Vol. VIII., p. 16.

[2] It is to be observed, however, that this last letter is from the P. T. volume, and is therefore untrustworthy as evidence.

ciated with him on such close terms of intimacy as Tickell and Philips. He would have called to mind the manner in which Addison had mentioned his works, as compared with the Spectator's remarks on those of his two Whig followers; the qualifying clauses in the warm praise bestowed on the 'Essay on Criticism;' the unreserved eulogy of Philips' Pastorals, the silence about his own; the commendations of Tickell's verses on the Peace; the omission to mention 'Windsor Forest.' The feeling of estrangement, growing out of this real or imagined jealousy, was aggravated by a positive grievance in the readiness with which Addison had listened to Philips' tales of Pope's engagement to write in the Tory interest, and now at the critical point of his fortunes the younger poet thought he had conclusive proof of his rival's underhand devices to prevent him from rising. Living in the midst of scandalous rumour, with all his native irritability so inflamed as to leave his mind an easy prey to resentment and suspicion, the probability is that these feelings gave birth at this time to the satire on Addison which was afterwards incorporated in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' in the form of the famous character of Atticus.

There are, however, two different accounts of the origin of the verses. Ayre, Pope's first biographer, makes them the result of an interview between Addison and Pope which ended in a violent quarrel. His story, though it is given at length by all Pope's biographers, is, in my opinion, not deserving of the slightest consideration. The narrative generally rests on no authority, and the behaviour of the parties, as he reports it, is utterly inconsistent with all that we know of their characters.[1] Pope's own story is given in Spence's 'Anecdotes':—

"Philips seemed to have been encouraged to abuse me, in coffee-houses and conversations: Gildon wrote a thing about Wycherley, in which he had abused both me and my relations very grosly. Lord Warwick himself told me one day 'that it was in vain for me to endeavour to be well with Mr. Addison; that his jealous temper would

[1] Ayre's 'Life of Pope,' vol. i., pp. 99–101.

never admit of a settled friendship between us; and to convince me of what he had said, assured me that Addison had encouraged Gildon to publish those scandals, and had given him ten guineas after they were published.' The next day, while I was heated with what I had heard, I wrote a letter to Mr. Addison to let him know 'that I was not unacquainted with this behaviour of his; that if I was to speak severely of him in return, it should not be in such a dirty way; that I should rather tell him himself fairly of his faults, and allow his good qualities; and that it should be something in the following manner.' I then subjoined the first sketch of what has been since called my satire on Addison. He used me very civilly ever after; and never did me any injustice that I know of, from that time to his death, which was about three years after."[1]

To this tale I regret to say that, in my opinion, no belief is to be attached. It must be remembered that, when Pope told it to Spence, he had to clear himself from the damaging and, as I am fully convinced, unjust accusation that the satire had been written after Addison's death, and he had also to show that it was based on more solid grounds than mere suspicion of Addison's double dealing in the matter of the translation of Homer. As I have examined the narrative in detail in the Introductory Remarks to the Prologue to the Satires, I need only here repeat the reasons for which I think that Pope's evidence in his own favour should not be received. No such libel by Gildon as Pope speaks of is included in the four volumes of abusive pamphlets written by his enemies, which he caused to be carefully bound and preserved, the only attack upon him by Gildon being made in the 'New Rehearsal,' which was published in 1714. If (as Pope probably wished the reader to infer) the information given him by Lord Warwick was given after Addison had become the latter's stepfather, the marriage with the Countess of Warwick did not take place till August, 1716, and in the meantime Pope's Translation had been most liberally praised in a paper in the 'Freeholder' of the 7th May in the same year, written by Addison. If, on the other hand, Lord Warwick spoke to him on the subject before the marriage of his mother, the conversation must still have taken place after December,

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' pp. 148–9.

1715, the month in which Wycherley died. But the 'heat' out of which the satire grew was evidently felt as early as July 15, the date assigned to the genuine or fictitious letter to Craggs, in which the 'sketch' of the character is given in prose. Lastly, in the poetical 'sketch' itself, in one at least of the early versions, what in later editions became 'Gildon's *venal* quill' is found to be merely 'Gildon's *meaner* quill;'[1] while a couplet was inserted in the satire on Addison—

> "Who, when two wits on rival themes contest,
> Approves of both, but likes the worst the best,"

which was omitted in the final character of Atticus.

All this makes it probable, as I have already said, that the satire was engendered by the suspicions caused by the appearance of Tickell's rival translation. That it was ever sent to Addison is in the highest degree unlikely. Open warfare of this kind was not in Pope's manner, while the liberal criticism in the 'Freeholder' is written without a shadow of reserve, such as must have appeared if Addison had ever seen the verses. They were read by others, however, of whom Lady M. W. Montagu was one,[2] and after having been commended as a masterpiece by Atterbury, were allowed to appear in print for the first time in December, 1722. Hence arose naturally the report that the satire had been written after Addison's death, and Pope's numerous enemies seized on the opportunity of blackening his character. Forced to defend himself from this injurious charge, angry that what was in his opinion the justice of the satire should not be recognized, and at the same time, perhaps, uneasily conscious that his suspicions about the Translation might have been insufficiently grounded, he produced as his apology a romantic narrative, in which he sought to give colour to his own original belief by the addition of numerous fictitious details. He was firmly convinced, and in this, perhaps, he was not wrong, that Addison was jealous of his reputation, and having once secured this

[1] But on this point see 'Corrigenda,' p. 445. [2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 237.

basis of fact, his lax moral code allowed him to build upon it such an imaginative structure as would be most likely to appeal to the public judgment.

As to the merits of the two translations the verdict of the town was never in doubt: Tickell's version sank before the overpowering superiority of its rival. One hundred and seventy years have since gone by, and many attempts have been made by writers of distinction to supply the admitted deficiencies in Pope's work. Yet his translation of the 'Iliad' occupies a position in literature which no other has ever approached. It is the one poem of the kind that has obtained a reputation beyond the limits of the country in the language of which it is written, and the only one that has fascinated the imagination of the unlearned. Many an English reader, to whom the Greek was literally a dead language, has followed through it the action of the Iliad with a livelier interest than that of the 'Faery Queen' or of 'Paradise Lost.' The descriptions of the single combats and the funeral games have delighted many a schoolboy, who has perhaps revolted with an equally intense abhorrence from the syntax of the original. What is the cause of the unique success obtained by this Translation? To answer this question conclusively I think we have only to consider the different objects aimed at in their translations by Pope and his rivals, and to compare with his their renderings of a single passage in the 'Iliad.'

All English translations of Homer may be said to be comprised in three classes. The first exhibits the method followed by almost all Pope's predecessors before Dryden, and its most favourable representative is Chapman. Chapman's aim was to reproduce the *sense* of his original. Having chosen the long ballad-metre as his vehicle of translation, he stuck so closely to the text that, though translating paraphrastically, he rendered the Greek in an even smaller number of English lines. No material thought is omitted in his version; none is added; by his literal fidelity, and (it must be added) by his own genuine poetical feeling, he catches something of the greatness of his author, but his metre is not equal to the epic dignity of the

subject, and his verses are devoid of grace, proportion, and harmony. His translation of Agamemnon's invective against Calchas at the opening of the 'Iliad' offers a good example of the results of the method he adopted:

> "Prophet of ill! for never good came from thee towards me,
> Not to a word's worth; evermore thou took'st delight to be
> Offensive in thine auguries, which thou continuest still;
> Now casting thy prophetic gall, and vouching all our ill,
> Shot from Apollo, is imposed since I refused the price
> Of fair Chryseis' liberty; which would in no worth rise
> To my rate of herself, which moves my vows to have her home,
> Past Clytemnestra loving her, that graced my nuptial room
> With her virginity and flower. Nor ask her merits less
> For person, disposition, wit, and skill in housewiferies.
> And yet for all this she shall go, if more conducible
> That course be than her holding here. I rather wish the weal
> Of my loved army than the death. Provide yet instantly
> Supply for her, that I alone of all our royalty
> Lose not my winnings; 'tis not fit, ye see all, I lose mine,
> Forced by another, see as well some other may resign
> His prize to me."

Another ideal prevails in the translation of Cowper. His object, which has been that of every subsequent translator, was not only to reproduce Homer's sense as literally as possible, but also to reproduce his style in an epic manner peculiar to the English language. He thought that the best equivalent for the Homeric hexameter was Miltonic blank verse, founding his opinion on the intersection of the verses, and the pauses in particular metrical places which he saw to be common to both styles. On the same principle a recent translator, the late Mr. Worsley, held that the simplicity of Homer might be rendered by a literal translation of his language into old-fashioned English, and in the Spenser stanza. The fatal error of this method, in my opinion, is that the translators conceive of style as something separate from their subject and from themselves. The style of Milton, admirably suited to what Pope called the 'out-of-the-world' nature of its subject,[1] is ill adapted for a narrative of swift action, full of incident, passion, and vehement

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' pp. 174 and 200.

debate, and Cowper, in his attempt to express these ch teristics in it, only makes it heavy and dull. Wors Spenserian experiment, though executed with great ski equally futile. The semi-conscious artificiality of Spen manner harmonises completely with the matter of the 'F Queen,' but it has nothing in common with an archaism ar from the translation of Homer's phrases into obsolete Eng made doubly artificial by the repetitions of rhyme necessit by the metre. The following is Mr. Worsley's version of passage translated by Chapman:—

"Thou seer of mischief dire,
No good to me thy hateful voice yet brings;
Prompt always from thy heart bad divination springs.

"Neither aforetime hast thou spoken good,
Nor brought to pass that any good might be,
Who now the Argives in thy miscreant mood
Teachest for all their troubles to hate me,
Since I restored not for a splendid fee
Chryseis, whom I much desire to dwell
Safe in my own house with myself, for she
Seems to my mind in pleasing to excel
My true wife Clytemnestra, whom she equals well

In womanly good, not worse in anything,
Mien, form, or stature, wit and household grace,
Yet will I send her, though my soul it sting,
If better it be so, back to her place;
Nor will I let these die before my face;
But now fit recompense with speed prepare
That not alone of all men in this place
I go rewardless—'twere by no means fair:
For mark ye all, *my* guerdon disappears elsewhere."

Pope's version is as follows:—

"Augur accursed! denouncing mischief still,
Prophet of plagues, for ever boding ill!
Still must that tongue some wounding message bring,
And still thy priestly pride provoke thy king?
For this are Phœbus' oracles explored,
To teach the Greeks to murmur at their lord?
For this with falsehoods is my honour stained;
Is heaven offended and a priest profaned,
Because my prize, my beauteous prize, I hold,
And heavenly charms prefer to proffered gold?

A maid unmatched in manners as in face,
Skilled in each art, and crowned with every grace,
Not half so dear were Clytemnestra's charms,
When first her blooming beauties blessed my arms,
Yet, if the gods demand her, let her sail;
Our cares are only for the public weal:
Let me be deemed the hateful cause of all,
And suffer rather than my people fall.
The prize, the beauteous prize, I will resign,
So dearly valued, and so justly mine.
But since for common good I yield the fair,
My private loss let grateful Greece repair;
Nor unrewarded let your prince complain,
That he alone has fought and bled in vain."

Judged merely *as a translation* it is obvious that Pope's version is inferior in point of verbal exactness both to Chapman's and Worsley's. He makes no attempt like Chapman to give a literal transcript of Homer's thought; nor is he careful like Worsley to seek an equivalent for Homer's manner. His aim is to master the general sense of what he is about to render, and then to give this in such rhetorical forms as his own style requires, omitting and even adding thoughts at his pleasure. But regarded as poetry there can surely be no question that this method gives him a vast superiority over his rivals. He translates the original with the naturalness of Chapman, but without his crude simplicity; with the distinction of Worsley, but without his affected archaism.

In rendering Homer into English verse the first question a translator has to ask himself is "How much of his poetry is it possible to transfer?" Chapman's practical answer to this question errs from defect: if Homer be translated into verse, it is not enough merely to put his thoughts into metre; they must be presented with metrical refinement, grace, and harmony. Worsley's answer errs from excess, for Homer's manner cannot be preserved in any English metrical style: it belongs to Homer and to Greek. Pope's answer is of course in many respects inadequate. As Bentley said, his translation is not Homer. It is frequently inaccurate. De Quincey,

indeed, says that "criticism has not succeeded in fixing upon him any errors of ignorance;" but Gilbert Wakefield has cited numerous passages in which such errors occur.[1] His translation is to some extent open also to the charge brought against it by Wordsworth and Coleridge of corrupting the language with a meretricious standard of poetic diction. Many of its faults are of course derived from the metrical vehicle adopted. Thus the necessary recurrence of the same rhymes, in the mechanical process of translation, has occasioned the conventional use of certain words which are inadequate to express the thought that is intended. 'Train,' for instance, on account of its convenience as a rhyming word, is often used to signify 'a host.' Sometimes rhyme betrays the poet into ungrammatical or elliptical phrases: it frequently causes him to place a noun before the verb which governs it, though nothing is to be gained by the inversion. Other defects again, such as the repeated use of periphrases, are due to the fact that Pope founded his own epic style on that of the Latin poets, whose manner is most opposed to Homer's. His first translations were of the 'Thebais' of Statius, who, after Virgil, was his favourite among the Latin poets. Naturally therefore he fell into the ways by which that poet sought to attain magnificence of style in spite of the poverty of his subject. One of these devices was to heighten a single thought by the accumulation of images; for example, in the description of Apollo slaying the Greeks, where Homer simply says, 'And the people perished,' Pope says 'And heaped the camp with mountains of the dead.' He fails, as might be expected, in passages of natural description and of pathos; in the former in consequence of his use of conventional periphrasis, in the latter from his artificiality.

[1] Among other passages in the first book alone Wakefield, in his edition of Pope's 'Iliad,' criticises the rendering in vv. 44, 330, 638, 642, 730. It is indeed sufficiently obvious that Pope did not understand the Greek text; and where he goes wrong it is from following the rendering of Dryden or some other of his predecessors.

But all these are faults of detail rather than of design. Looking to the character of the 'Iliad' as a whole, to its warlike action, to its spirit of adventure, to its animated rhetoric, it cannot be denied that Pope has vividly entered into the imaginary situation, not indeed in the spirit of Homer, but nevertheless in the spirit of a genuine poet. He feels with the leading characters, realises with ardour their valiant deeds of arms, and delights in their interchange of exhortation and invective, particularly when the passage happens to be of a moral and elevated cast. On such occasions he exhibits the first specimens of that style which he afterwards employed in his Epistle to Lord Oxford,' and in the Prologue and Epilogue to the Satires, a style springing naturally out of the genius of a free nation, and the lofty eloquence developed from free Parliamentary debate. In the speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus he perhaps attains the highest level of which the heroic couplet is capable, and I do not believe that any Englishman of taste and imagination can read the lines without feeling that if Pope had produced nothing but his Translation of Homer, he would be entitled to the praise of a great original poet.

"Why boast we, Glaucus, our extended reign
Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian plain,
Our numerous herds that range the fruitful field,
And hills where vines their purple harvest yield,
Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crowned,
Our feasts entranced with music's sprightly sound?
Why on those shores are we with joy surveyed,
Admired as heroes, and as gods obeyed;
Unless great acts superior merit prove,
And vindicate the bounteous powers above?
'Tis ours, the dignity they give to grace;
The first in valour as the first in place:
That when with wondering eyes our martial bands
Behold our deeds transcending our commands,
Such, they may cry, deserve the sovereign state,
Whom those that envy dare not imitate!
Could all our care elude the gloomy grave,
Which claims no less the fearful than the brave,
For lust of fame I should not vainly dare
In fighting fields, nor urge the soul to war.

But since, alas! ignoble age must come,
Disease, and death's inexorable doom;
The life which others pay let us bestow,
And give to fame what we to nature owe;
Brave though we fall, and honoured if we live,
Or let us glory gain, or glory give."

As the work proceeded the poet's subscribers saw no reason to repent of the support they had given him.

"I find," he writes to Caryll on February 4, 1718, "upon stating the final account of the last volume of Homer, that not above ten persons of all living subscribers, have refused to continue and send for their third volumes (a thing which I am sure you will be pleased to hear), of which number Sir Harry Tichborne is one, and Will Plowden, Esq., another. I beg, when you see them, you would propose to repay them the subscription, and to take back their first volume, which may be sent me in one of the hampers. I have taken that course with the rest of my deserters, and may do it with evident profit, having a demand for more entire new sets than I can furnish any other way."

In 1715–16–17–18 he published a volume yearly. Various causes, however, delayed the publication of the fifth and sixth volumes. The agitation or depression of mind into which he was thrown by the death of his father, and the change in his relations with the Blounts, caused him to be restless in his movements throughout the year 1718. During the winter and spring he remained at Chiswick in what he calls a 'deep desert solitude four miles from London,' working at his translation, and watching tenderly over his mother, "whose health," he writes to Caryll, "is so excessively precarious that my life with her is like watching the rising and falling of a taper in its last socket."[1]

In the summer he went to Oxford, whither, says he,

"I was necessitated to come to continue my translation of Homer, for at my own house I have no peace from visitants, and appointments of continual parties of pleasure—things very unseasonable to a man who has such a cruel unproportionable task on his hands. There will be no stirring me from the country hereabouts, till I have done this whole volume (the fifth); for here, except this day that I spend at Oxford, I am quite in a desert incognito from my very neighbours, by the help

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of January 25, 1717–18.

of a noble lord who has consigned a lone house to me for this very purpose. I could not lie at his own, for the very reason I do not go to Grinstead, because I love his company too well to mind anything else when it is in my way to enjoy that." [1]

The house from which this letter was written was Stanton Harcourt, described by Pope in his letters to Lady M. W. Montagu and the Duke of Buckingham.[2] The noble lord was Lord Harcourt, whose own seat, Cokethorpe, was in the immediate neighbourhood, and who, with his wife, seems to have been assiduous in his courtesy to Mrs. Pope when her son had prevailed upon her to join him in his retreat. Gay also was his guest for part of his sojourn at Stanton Harcourt, and assisted him in the composition of the well-known letter, recording the death of the hay-makers struck by lightning, which was sent to Lady M. W. Montagu, and several other correspondents.

The fifth volume was finished at Stanton Harcourt in 1718, and at the ordinary rate of progress the last would have been ready in the summer of 1719. Pope himself looked forward to his liberation about that season.

"When that day of my deliverance from poetry and slavery shall arise," he writes to Broome, "as I guess it may this summer, I hope to conclude my long labour with more ease than triumph, better pleased with a conscientious discharge of all my debts and duties than with any vain praise the world may give me. I shall retire a *miles emeritus*, and pity the poets militant who are to succeed me." [3]

Bad health, and the preparation of the Indexes, postponed the longed-for hour, and it was May 12, 1720, before the fifth and sixth volumes were published together. It is highly probable that his letter to Broome expressed his real feelings. His appetite for applause had already been sated by the praises lavished on the early volumes of the Translation, and the satisfaction at feeling himself free from mechanical labour must have been great. But his friends felt that the occasion

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of Aug. 11, 1718.

[2] See Vol. IX. p. 400. and Vol. X. p. 147.

[3] Letter from Pope to Broome of Feb. 16, 1718–19.

must not be allowed to pass without a song of triumph; s Gay accordingly undertook to describe 'Mr. Pope's Welco from Greece' in 21 stanzas of *ottava rima* obviou imitated from the opening of the forty-sixth canto of 1 'Orlando Furioso.' As these verses afford a vivid glimpse the extent and variety of Pope's acquaintance, as well as 1 familiarity of intercourse prevailing at that time between aristocratic and literary elements of English society, they here reproduced with such notes as the different names se to require:—

MR. POPE'S WELCOME FROM GREECE.

A copy of verses written by Mr. Gay upon Mr. Pope's having finished hi Translation of Homer's Iliad.

LONG hast thou, friend, been absent from thy soil,
Like patient Ithacus at siege of Troy;
I have been witness of thy six years' toil,
Thy daily labours, and thy night's annoy,
Lost to thy native land with great turmoil,
On the wide sea, oft threatening to destroy:
Methinks with thee I've trod Sigæan ground,
And heard the shores of Hellespont resound.

II.

Did I not see when thou first sett'st sail
To seek adventures fair in Homer's land?
Did I not see thy sinking spirits fail,
And wish thy bark had never left the strand?[1]
Even in mid ocean often didst thou quail,
And oft lift up thy holy eye and hand,
Praying the Virgin dear and saintly choir,
Back to the port to bring thy bark entire.

III.

Cheer up, my friend, thy dangers now are o'er;
Methinks—nay, sure the rising coasts appear;
Hark how the guns salute from either shore,
As thy trim vessel cuts the Thames so fair:

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[1] Compare p. 152.

Shouts answering shouts from Kent and Essex roar,
And bells break loud from every gust of air:
Bonfires do blaze, and bones and cleavers ring,
As at the coming of some mighty king.[1]

IV.

Now pass we Gravesend with a friendly wind,
And Tilbury's white fort, and long Blackwall;
Greenwich where dwells the friend of human kind,
More visited than either park or hall.
Withers the good,[2] and (with him ever joined)
Facetious Disney,[3] greet thee first of all:
I see his chimney smoke and hear him say:
"Duke! that's the room for Pope, and that for Gay.

V.

"Come in, my friends, here shall ye dine and lie,
And here shall breakfast, and here dine again;
And sup, and breakfast on (if ye comply)
For I have still some dozens of champagne:"
His voice still lessens as the ship sails by;
He waves his hand to bring us back in vain;
For now I see, I see proud London's spires;
Greenwich is lost, and Deptford Dock retires.

VI.

Oh, what a concourse swarms on yonder quay!
The sky re-echoes with new shouts of joy:

[1] This stanza was suggested by the following one of Ariosto:—

'Sento venir per allegrezza un tuono
Che fremer l'aria e rimbombar fa l'onde;
Odo di squille, odo di trombe un suono
Che l'alto popolar grido confonde.
Or comincio a discernere chi sono
Questi ch' empion del porto ambe le sponde.
Par che tutti s' allegrino ch' io sia
Venuto a fin di così lunga via.

[2] Major-General Withers, on whom Pope wrote an epitaph in 1729. See Vol. IV., p. 387. He commanded at the capitulation of Tournay in 1709, on which occasion the 'Tatler' wrote of him: 'No man deserves better of his friends than that gentleman, whose distinguishing character it is that he gives his orders with the familiarity, and engages his followers with the generosity of a fellow soldier.' ('Tatler,' 46.)

[3] Colonel Disney commanded a regiment on the Irish establishment, which on the succession of the House of Hanover he was in danger of losing, as he was prominent on the Tory side in politics, and was one of the Brotherhood of Sixteen so often mentioned in Swift's Journal to Stella and in his correspondence. His humour is alluded to complimentarily by Swift, and otherwise by Lady W. Montagu, party spirit probably contributing to the estimate in both cases. See Vol. IX., p. 259. He died 21 Nov. 1730, and was buried in the same grave as his friend Withers, to whom he had erected the monument in Westminster Abbey.

By all this show, I ween, 'tis Lord Mayor's Day;
I hear the voice of trumpet and haut-boy.
No, now I see them near—oh, these are they
Who come in crowds to welcome thee from Troy.
Hail to the bard whom long as lost we mourned,
From siege, from battle, and from storm returned.

VII.

Of goodly dames and courteous knights I view
The silken petticoat and broidered vest;
Yea, peers and mighty dukes, with ribbands blue
(True blue, fair emblem of unstained breast),
Others I see as noble, and more true,
By no court badge distinguished from the rest:
First see I Methuen[1] of sincerest mind,
As Arthur[2] grave, as soft as womankind.

VIII.

What lady's that to whom he gently bends?
Who knows not her? ah those are Wortley's eyes.[3]
How art thou honoured numbered with her friends;
For she distinguishes the good and wise.
The sweet-tongued Murray near her side attends:[4]
Now to my heart the glance of Howard flies;[5]

[1] Sir Paul Methuen, Secretary of State in 1716–7. Lord Hervey, in his own vein, gives him a character in some respects similar: "The character of this man," he says, "was a very singular one: it was a mixture of Spanish formality and English roughness, strongly seasoned with pride, and not untinctured with honour; he was romantic in his turn to the highest degree of absurdity; odd, impracticable, passionate, and obstinate; a thorough coxcomb, and a little mad." 'Memoirs,' vol. i. 125. For another mention of him see '1740,' v. 20 and note. Vol. III., p. 496.

[2] Arthur Moore, Commissioner of Plantations, father of Pope's enemy the 'giddy' James Moore Smyth. See Prologue to Satires, v. 23 and note.

[3] Compare 'Epistle to Jervas,' v. 60 and note, and Letter to Lady M. W. Montagu, Nov. 1716, Vol. IV., p. 363.

[4] Mrs. Murray, afterwards Lady Murray, wife of Sir Alexander Murray of Stanhope. An appendix to her 'Memoirs' of her father and mother says: "The epithet bestowed on Mrs. Murray alludes evidently to one of the fascinating accomplishments for which she was early admired, and which she retained to the latest period of her life,—when she was still accustomed to sing the native airs and ballads of her own country, with a delicacy and pathos quite peculiar to herself." She afterwards had a serious quarrel with Lady M. W. Montagu.

[5] Henrietta, wife of the Honble C. Howard, afterwards Earl of Suffolk.

Now Hervey, fair of face, I mark full well
With thee, youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepell.[1]

IX.

I see two lovely sisters, hand in hand,
The fair-haired Martha and Teresa brown;[2]
Madge Bellenden, the tallest of the land;
And smiling Mary, soft and fair as down.[3]
Yonder I see the cheerful Duchess stand,
For friendship, zeal, and blithesome humours known:[4]
Whence that loud shout in such a hearty strain?
Why all the Hamiltons are in her train.

X.

See next the decent Scudamore advance[5]
With Winchilsea, still meditating song,[6]
With her perhaps Miss Howe came there by chance,
Nor knows with whom, nor why she comes along.[7]
Far off from these see Santlow famed for dance,
And frolick Bicknell, and her sister young,[8]
With other names by me not to be named,
Much loved in private, not in public famed

[1] The Honble. John, afterwards Lord Hervey, who was married to Mary Lepell, Maid of Honour to the Princess Caroline in 1720. The marriage was early in the year, but was not announced till October.

[2] Martha and Teresa Blount.

[3] Daughters of John, second Lord Bellenden. The latter was the most beautiful of all the Maids of Honour. She married Colonel John Campbell, afterwards Duke of Argyll.

[4] The Duchess of Hamilton, widow of the Duke of Hamilton, killed in the duel with Lord Mohun in 1712, for an account of which, and for specimens of the Duchess's 'blithesome humours,' see Vol. IX., pp. 460–4.

[5] Frances, only daughter of Simon, fourth Lord Digby, married James, Viscount Scudamore. See Vol. IX., p. 69.

[6] Anne Kingsmill, wife of the fourth Earl of Winchilsea. Commendatory verses by her were prefixed to Pope's first volume of poems. She died in the August of this year.

[7] Either Mary, daughter of the first Viscount Howe, or Sophia Howe, daughter of General Emmanuel Howe, probably the latter, as the description seems to answer to her flighty disposition. For particulars of her history, see Suffolk Letters, vol. i., p. 35.

[8] Mrs. Santlow, married this year, Sept. 19, to Booth the actor. Theophilus Cibber says of her in his 'English Stage,' iii. 375: "She was a beautiful woman, lively in her countenance, delicate in her form, a pleasing actress and a most admirable dancer; generally allowed in the last mentioned part of her profession to have been superior to all who had been seen before her, and perhaps she has not been since excelled."

Mrs. Bicknell's beauty and spirit as a comic actress are praised in 'Tatler,' Nos. 3 and 11. She played in the 'What d'ye Call it' and in

XI.

But now behold the female band retire,
And the shrill music of their voice is stilled!
Methinks I see famed Buckingham admire,
That in Troy's ruins thou hast not been killed,
Sheffield, who knows to strike the living lyre,
With hand judicious, like thy Homer skilled:[1]
Bathurst impetuous, hastens to the coast,
Whom you and I strive who shall love the most.[2]

XII.

See generous Burlington[3] with goodly Bruce,[4]
(But Bruce comes wafted in a soft sedan),
Dan Prior next, beloved by every muse,[5]
And friendly Congreve, unreproachful man![6]
(Oxford by Cunningham hath sent excuse),[7]
See hearty Watkins come with cup and can:[8]
And Lewis, who has never friend forsaken;[9]
And Laughton whispering asks—Is Troy Town taken?[10]

XIII.

Earl Warwick comes, of free and honest mind;[11]
Bold, generous Craggs, whose heart was ne'er disguised;[12]
Ah why, sweet St. John, cannot I thee find?
St. John for every social virtue prized—[13]

'Three Hours after Marriage.' In speaking of 'her sister *young*,' Gay seems to be only punning, as Miss Younger had been on the stage since 1708.

[1] Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham. Whatever his judgment may have been, he did not know how to strike the lyre.

[2] Allen, Lord Bathurst, to whom the Third Moral Essay was addressed.

[3] Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, to whom the Fourth Moral Essay was addressed.

[4] Charles Lord Bruce, in 1740 Earl of Aylesbury married Lady Juliana Boyle, sister of Lord Burlington, 16 January, 1720.

[5] Matthew Prior died in the following year.

[6] Pope had dedicated his 'Homer' to him.

[7] Lord Oxford had been liberated from the Tower in 1717. His friend Alexander Cunningham was M.P. for Renfrewshire.

[8] Henry Watkins, who preceded Swift's friend Harrison as Secretary to the Dutch Embassy, under Lord Raby, afterwards Earl of Strafford.

[9] Erasmus Lewis, Secretary to Lord Oxford, and a frequent correspondent of Swift.

[10] Perhaps John *Lawton*, brother-in-law to the Earl of Halifax, who was a subscriber to the Translation.

[11] Addison's stepson: he died the following year.

[12] The Secretary: he died February 15, 1721.

[13] Lord Bolingbroke, then an exile in France.

Alas! to foreign climates he's confined,
Or else to see thee here I well surmised:
Thou too, my Swift, dost breathe Bœotian air,[1]
When wilt thou bring back wit and humour here?

XIV.

Harcourt I see, for eloquence renowned,
The mouth of justice, oracle of law![2]
Another Simon is beside him found,
Another Simon like as straw to straw.[3]
How Lansdown smiles with lasting laurel crowned![4]
What mitred prelate there commands our awe?
See Rochester approving nods the head,
And ranks one modern with the mighty dead.[5]

XV.

Carlton and Chandos thy arrival grace;[6]
Hanmer whose eloquence the unbiassed sways;[7]
Harley, whose goodness opens in his face
And shows his heart the seat where virtue stays.[8]
Ned Blount advances next with hasty pace,
In haste, yet sauntering, hearty in his ways.[9]
I see the friendly Carylls come by dozens,
Their wives, their uncles, daughters, sons and cousins.[10]

[1] Compare 'Dunciad,' i. 25.

[2] Simon, Lord Harcourt, one of the peers created in 1711; Lord Chancellor in the following year.

[3] The Hon. Simon Harcourt, who died in the same year these verses were written; the subject of Pope's epitaph.

[4] George Granville, Lord Lansdown. His not very lasting laurels were supposed to be due to him for his 'Myra.'

[5] Atterbury. Compare 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' v. 140 and note. He was on the side of the Ancients in the Battle of the Books.

[6] Henry Boyle, Lord Carleton, for whom see 'Epilogue to Satires,' ii. 80 and note; and James Brydges, Duke of Chandos, the supposed original of Timon in the 'Fourth Moral Essay.'

[7] Sir Thomas Hanmer, Speaker in Queen Anne's last Parliament, in which he made a strong speech, somewhat to the dismay of the Tories, in favour of the Protestant succession. Tindal in his 'History,' speaking of it, says: 'This speech had a great influence on the *unbiassed* and impartial members.' He belonged to what Lord Bolingbroke called the party of the Whimsicals.

[8] Edward, afterwards second Earl of Oxford. See 'Moral Essay,' iii. 243.

[9] Edward Blount, of Blagdon, Devonshire, Pope's correspondent.

[10] Pope writes to Caryll, March 19, 1714: "After having given you the trouble of reading two of my letters very lately, I cannot refrain from sending you a third, in a more particular manner to thank you for the industry you have used, as well as for the effect of it on those subscribers you gave me the list of. I think you have been very successful in procuring so many, and too kind in listing so many out of your own family."

XVI.

Arbuthnot there I see, in physic's art
As Galen learned, or famed Hippocrate;
Whose company drives sorrow from the heart
As all disease his med'cines dissipate:[1]
Kneller amid the triumph bears his part,
Who could (were mankind lost) anew create;
What can th' extent of his vast soul confine?[2]
A painter, critic, engineer, divine!

XVII.

Thee Jervas hails, robust and debonair,[3]
'Now have we conquered Homer, friends!' he cr
Dartneuf, gay joker,[4] joyous Ford[5] is there,
And wondering Maine, so fat with laughing eyes,
(Gay, Maine, and Cheney, boon companions dear;
Gay fat, Maine fatter, Cheney huge of size).[6]
Yea, Dennis, Gildon[7] (hearing thou hast riches),
And honest, hatless Cromwell, with red breeches.[8]

XVIII.

O, Wanley, whence com'st thou with shortened hair
And visage from thy shelves with dust besprent?
'Forsooth (quoth he) from placing Homer there,
As ancients to compyle is mine entent;
Of ancients only hath Lord Harley care,
But hither me hath my meeke lady sent:—
In manuscript of Greek rede we thilke same,
But book yprint best plesyth my gude dame.'[9]

[1] Dr. Arbuthnot, the friend of Pope and Gay.

[2] Sir Godfrey Kneller. The praise of Kneller as a divine is ironical, as he is said to have been somewhat free in his religious opinions.

[3] Charles Jervas, the portrait painter, Pope's friend and master in painting.

[4] Charles Darteneuf or Dartiquenave, for whom see 'Imitation of Horace,' Sat. i. 46, and 'Moral Essay,' i. 77 and note.

[5] Charles Ford, Swift's frequent correspondent, and appointed Gazetteer by his influence in 1712.

[6] No doubt Dr. George C Bath, for whom and for weight see letter to Lyttel 4th, 1736, Vol. IX., p. 170,

[7] John Dennis and Charle Pope's enemies.

[8] Henry Cromwell, Pope friend. There had been a between him and Pope sir and as he was not a subscrit 'Translation,' it is difficu why he should be mentione

[9] Humphrey Wanley, L ley's Librarian. See Vol 115.

XIX.

Yonder I see among th' expecting crowd
  Evans with laugh jocose [1] and tragic Young ; [2]
High buskined Booth,[3] grave Mawbert,[4] wandering Frowde,[5]
  And Titcombe's belly waddles slow along.[6]
See Digby faints at Southern talking loud,[7]
  Yea Steele and Tickell mingle in the throng,[8]
Tickell whose skiff (in partnership they say)
Set forth for Greece but foundered on the way.[9]

XX.

Lo, the two Doncastles in Berkshire known ! [10]
  Lo, Bickford, Fortescue of Devon Land ! [11]
Lo, Tooker, Eckershall, Sykes, Rawlinson ! [12]
  See hearty Morley take thee by the hand ! [13]
Ayrs, Graham, Buckridge, joy thy voyage done ;
  But who can count the leaves, the stars, the sand ?
Lo, Stonor, Fenton, Caldwell, Ward, and Broome ; [14]
Lo, thousands more, but I want rhyme and room !

[1] Dr. Abel Evans, of St. John's College, Oxford. He is mentioned as an epigrammatist in company with Young in 'Dunciad,' ii. 116.

[2] Edward Young, the poet, called 'tragic,' on account of his play 'Busiris,' acted at Drury Lane in 1719.

[3] Barton Booth — 'well-mouthed Booth'—the famous tragic actor. See 'Epistle to Augustus,' v. 123 and note. Pope had no love for him.

[4] James Francis Mawbert, the portrait painter. According to Dallaway, he copied all the portraits of English poets which he could discover. He died in 1746.

[5] Philip Frowde, son of Ashburnham Frowde, Comptroller of the Foreign Office in the Post Office. He was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was pupil to Addison, and was the author of two tragedies, 'Philotas' and 'The Fall of Saguntum.' Compare the 'Farewell to London.'

[6] Compare letter to Cromwell, Vol. VI., p. 63, note [5].

[7] The Hon. Robert Digby, Pope's correspondent, who was very delicate and had to take asses' milk; and Southerne the dramatist, for whom see Vol. IV., p. 496.

[8] Sir Richard Steele and Thomas Tickell.

[9] Alluding to Tickell's Translation of the first book of the Iliad, supposed to have been produced with the help of Addison.

[10] For the two Dancastles of Binfield see Vol. IX., p. 484.

[11] William Fortescue, Pope's friend, afterwards Master of the Rolls, and his neighbour in Devonshire, called in Pope's letter to Fortescue of Sept. 10, 1724, 'Esquire Bickford,' who seems to have been a country gentleman, with a taste for natural philosophy.

[12] There was a Martin *Tucker*, who was a subscriber for the 'Translation.' For James Eckershall, see Vol. X., p. 228, and for William Rollinson, Vol. X., p. 230.

[13] John Morley, brother-in-law of Sir George Brown ('Sir Plume'), for whom see Vol. X., p. 247.

[14] It is impossible to identify cer-

XXI.

How loved, how honoured thou! Yet be not vain!
And sure thou art not, for I hear thee say—
"All this my friends I owe to Homer's strain,
On whose strong pinions I exalt my lay.
What from contending cities did he gain?
And what rewards his grateful country pay?
None, none were paid—why then all this for me?
These honours, Homer, had been just to thee."

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tainly all the persons alluded to in the last four verses of this stanza. There were two Thomas Stonors among Pope's acquaintances, one of Twickenham (alluded to in Pope's letter to Digby of Sept. 1, 1722), and the other of Oxfordshire. The latter is probably the subscriber to the 'Translation.' Fenton and Broome were, of course, Pope's coadjutors in the Translation of the Odyssey.

CHAPTER IX.

LIFE AT TWICKENHAM.

Lord Bathurst—Villa at Twickenham—The South Sea Bubble—Atterbury's Plot—Edition of Shakespeare—Translation of the Odyssey.

1720—1726.

THROUGH the translation of Homer Pope had become, relatively speaking, a rich man, and his thoughts appear to have been much occupied with the manner in which he could invest to the best advantage a portion of the large sum he had earned. 'Mawson's Buildings' was no longer a residence suitable to his ideas. In June, 1718, he tells Caryll that he had been brought to London on business, "of which building a house in town was not the greatest,"[1] and a letter addressed to him by James Gibbs, the well-known architect, shows that the plans had been actually prepared.[2] From this design he was diverted in a very characteristic fashion by the advice of one of his friends.

Allen, Lord Bathurst, was among the twelve peers created by Harley in 1711 to form a Tory majority in the House of Lords. Though keenly interested in politics, as in every form of human activity, he played no prominent part in them, and was far more distinguished for his love of gallantry and for his vigorous enjoyment of country life. Burke describes him towards the end of his life—he lived till ninety-four—as possessing "virtues which made him one of the most amiable men of his age." Lord Lansdown writes of him to Mrs. Pendarves: "Lord Bathurst can best describe to you the ineffable joys of that country where happiness only reigns: he is a native of it, but it has always been a *terra incognita*

[1] Vol. VI., p. 263.

[2] Letter from Gibbs to Pope, Vol. IX., 510.

to me."[1] Every line of his letters to Pope breathes the gaiety and high animal spirits which lasted down to the day when his son, the somewhat precise Lord Chancellor, having retired from the dinner-table with some moral reflections on the advantages of early hours, he proposed to his guests, 'now that the old gentleman had gone to bed, to crack another bottle.' Few compliments, in fact, paid by the poet, seem to have been better deserved than the fine lines addressed to Bathurst in the Third Moral Essay:

> "The sense to value Riches, with the art
> T' enjoy them, and the virtue to impart,
> Not meanly nor ambitiously pursued,
> Not sunk by sloth, nor raised by servitude;
> To balance fortune by a just expense,
> Join with economy, magnificence;
> With splendour, charity; with plenty, health;
> Oh, teach us, Bathurst, yet unspoiled by wealth!
> That secret rare, between the extremes to move
> Of mad good-nature and of mean self-love."

Oakley, near Cirencester, Lord Bathurst's seat, was at no great distance from Oxford, and thither Pope came in June, 1718, either just before or soon after he settled down to work at Stanton Harcourt. He had a genuine taste for landscape gardening, which was also one of Lord Bathurst's accomplishments,[2] and he took especial delight in the woods at Oakley, where he had a 'bower' which he called his own, and which in Bowles's time was still in existence. The opening of his first preserved letter to Bathurst expresses the pleasure he found in his company:

> "To say a word in praise either of your wood or you would be alike impertinent, each being in its kind the finest thing I know and the most agreeable. I can only tell you very honestly, without a word of the high timber of one, or the high qualities of the other, that I thought it the best company I ever knew and the best place to enjoy it in."[3]

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[1] 'Autobiography of Mrs. Delany,' vol. i., p. 419.

[2] Compare Moral Essay, iv. 178: "Who plants like Bathurst or who builds like Boyle?"

[3] Letter from Pope to Bathurst of July 5, 1718.

When Bathurst heard from Pope of his designs of building a house in London he wrote him a letter in which he very delicately gave him a hint of the expense he was about to incur, and it is to be inferred that Pope relinquished his intention in consequence of his advice.

"I have only been disturbed," the letter says, "with the noise of saws and hammers, which has no other ill-effect whatsoever attending upon it, but only that it is apt to melt money sometimes. It may be proper for you to consider of the phenomenon against you begin to employ these engines about your *palazzotto* at London. Neither Aristotle nor Descartes can find a method to hinder the noise from having this effect, and though the one should tell you that there was an occult quality in those machines which operated in that manner upon gold and silver, and the other should say there were certain atoms which flow thence adapted to the pores of those metals, it would be of no manner of use to you in preserving the coin, but we that lay out our money in the country have the sanction of Horace upon our prudence, who says,

'Vos sapere et solos ais bene vivere, quorum
Conspicitur nitidis fundata pecunia villis.'

"I have consulted Dr. Bentley, and I find that he is of opinion that 'fundata pecunia' means money which was in the funds."[1]

In the autumn of the same year the poet was again at Oakley, delighting in its woods and in the company of its owner. The following passage from a letter addressed to Martha Blount on October 8, 1718, is interesting, both as a picture of the country life of the period, and as revealing in Pope a sensibility to the beauties of nature beyond what he usually displays:

"I am with Lord Bathurst at my bower; in whose groves we had yesterday a dry walk of three hours. It is the place of all others that I fancy; and I am not yet out of humour with it, though I have had it some months; it does not cease to be agreeable to me so late in the season; the very dying of the leaves adds a variety of colour that is not unpleasant. I look upon it as upon a beauty I once loved, whom I should preserve a respect for in her decay: and as we should look upon a friend with remembrance how he pleased us once, though now declined from his gay and flourishing condition.

"I write an hour or two every morning, then ride out a-hunting upon the Downs, eat heartily, talk tender sentiments with Lord B.,

[1] Letter from Bathurst to Pope of August 14, 1718.

or draw plans for houses and gardens, open avenues, cut glades, plant firs, contrive water-works, all very fine and beautiful in our own imagination. At night we play commerce, and play pretty high: I do more, I bett too, for I am really very rich and must throw away my money, if no deserving friend will use it. I like this course of life so well that I am resolved to stay here, till I hear of somebody's being in town that is worth coming after."

Moved perhaps by the companionship of Bathurst, Pope, having given up the idea of building in London, resolved in 1719 to invest a portion of the fortune he had derived from his Translation in the purchase from Vernon, a Turkey merchant, of the long lease of a house at Twickenham with five acres of land, the improvement of which occupied a great part of his thought for more than a year. It appears from the old prints that the house was in those days flanked by the cottages which Pope mentions in his letter to Bethel of March 20, 1743, one of which was no doubt occupied by John Searle, his gardener, the 'good John' of the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot.' From these it was separated by a path running up from the river into the road from Hampton Court to London, which divided the house from the larger portion of the grounds. All the ingenuity of Pope's brain was devoted to the development of this outlying part of his little estate. Horace Walpole writing to Sir Horace Mann in 1760, and lamenting the changes which Sir William Stanhope, the new owner, was making, says: "It was a little bit of ground of five acres, enclosed with three lanes; and seeing nothing. Pope had twisted and twirled and rhymed and harmonised this, till it appeared two or three sweet little lawns opening and opening beyond one another, and the whole surrounded with thick impenetrable woods."[1] The plan of the garden drawn by John Searle after Pope's death shows that by this 'twisting and twirling' the grounds were ultimately made to comprise a shell temple, a large mount, two small mounts, a bowling green, a vineyard, a quincunx, an obelisk in memory of the poet's mother, as well as hot-houses and gardeners' sheds. All

[1] Letter from Horace Walpole to Mann of June 20, 1760.

these improvements were carried out on the principles laid down in the Fourth Moral Essay on 'False Taste,' and represent the reaction against the formal Dutch style of gardening which Wise had made fashionable in the early years of the century. Pope, whose taste had been formed among the glades of Windsor Forest, was one of the first to cultivate the more natural manner introduced by Bridgeman and Kent. In his very limited domain he acted, perhaps too elaborately, on the leading ideas which in his Essay he recommends for adoption on a more extended scale:

> "Consult the genius of the place in all,
> That tells the waters or to rise or fall;
> Or helps the ambitious hill the heavens to scale,
> Or scoops in circling theatres the vale;
> Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
> Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades;
> Now breaks, or now directs the intending lines;
> Paints as you plant, and as you work, designs."[1]

The gradual development of the whole was doubtless the result of many and anxious consultations with his dilettante friends. Burlington perhaps suggested the colonnade he added to the front of the house; Bathurst the paths which he cut through the 'impenetrable woods'; while Peterborough, as the poet tells us,—

> "Now forms my quincunx, and now ranks my vines,
> Or tames the genius of the stubborn plain,
> Almost as quickly as he conquered Spain."[2]

The final stroke of genius by which the lawn on the Thames was connected with the garden on the other side of the road is imperishably connected with the name of Lady M. W. Montagu, and must be mentioned again presently in due order of time.

The year 1719 is the most barren in Pope's correspondence. No letter to Caryll is found between November, 1718, and February, 1720; one short one to Lord Bathurst, three or four short ones to Lady M. W. Montagu, two or three to

[1] Moral Essay, iv. 57. [2] 'Imitation of Horace,' Satire I., 130.

Broome, and as many to Martha and Teresa Blount, comprise all the records of his feelings and actions during this period. This reticence was chiefly due to the state of his health, which seems to have kept him almost a prisoner in his new house.

"Your desire," he writes to Caryll in February, 1719-20, "that I should tell you some news of the *beau monde* or from Parnassus could not be expressed at a time when I am less capable to comply with it. I have not the least knowledge of any poetical affairs; I have not seen a play these twelve months, been at no assembly, opera, or public place whatever. I am infamously celebrated as an inoffensive, unenvied writer, even by Curll himself. My friends have given me over as to all wit and pleasure. I am the common topic of ridicule as a country poet; and if once a month I trudge to town in a horseman's coat, I am stared at, every question I ask, as the most ignorant of all rustics. But to tell you the whole truth, besides all this I confess my unpoliteness proceeds from choice. I have lain under an impediment to all amusement and pleasure these many months, namely, very great indispositions, and such an alteration in my constitution, as rather deserves to be called a ruin than a revolution. I have had no appetite or digestion a vast while. I have perpetual vomitings and nervous distempers upon me, with a dejection of spirits that has totally taken away everything, if I ever had anything, which could be called vivacity or cheerfulness."

In a letter to Martha Blount of October 30th in the previous year, he gives us a curious glimpse of the remedies applied to him:

"As to my health I am in a very odd course for the pain in my side; I mean a course of brickbats and tiles, which they apply to me piping hot, morning and night; and sure it is very satisfactory to one who loves architecture at his heart to be built round in his very bed. My body may properly at this time be called a human structure."

Not many months after the publication of the final volumes of Homer, the bursting of the South Sea Bubble threw the whole nation into confusion. In February, 1720, the marvellous tales of the riches of the South Sea, spread by the Directors to produce a rise in the stock sufficient to enable them to fulfil their speculative contract with the State, had caused the public to rush into the scheme, and in his Third Moral Essay Pope draws a vivid picture of the social revolu-

tion that followed.[1] It is an interesting question how far he himself was carried away by the gambling spirit of the times. The allusions to this speculation in his correspondence are scattered, but a consistent narrative may be framed from them which will show, I think, that, on the whole, he behaved with comparative moderation in the midst of the popular madness.

From his 'Imitation of Horace, 2nd Satire, 2nd Book,' it is to be inferred that had he 'realised' when the craze was at its climax, he would have made a very considerable fortune. He says of himself:

> "In South Sea days not happier, when surmised
> The lord of thousands, than if now excised."

And after the bubble had burst he writes to Atterbury on September 23, 1720:

> "Most people thought the time would come, but no man prepared for it: no man considered it would come like a thief in the night; exactly as it happens in the case of our birth. Methinks God has punished the avaricious, as he often punishes sinners in their own way, in the very sin itself; the thirst of gain was their crime: that thirst continued became their punishment and ruin. As for those few who have the good fortune to remain *with half of what they imagined they had* (among whom is your humble servant), I would have them sensible of their felicity and convinced of the truth of old Hesiod's maxim, who after half his estate was swallowed up by the *directors* of those days, resolved that half to be more than the whole."

This seems to be an enigmatic way of saying that though his estate was only half what he imagined it to be, and what it might have been if he had sold in time, he was still a gainer on his original transaction. The history of his investments in the South Sea shows that this was the case.

From January, 1713–14, to September, 1716, South Sea Stock was under 100. In November of the latter year it was quoted at 106–105, and in the following December Pope had resolved to invest £500 for himself and the Blounts when it fell to 103. As the South Sea Stock is quoted at 100 on

[1] Moral Essays, iii. 135–142.

March 1, 1716–17, it may be assumed that an investment had been made before that date.

In December, 1719, and January, 1719–20, the Stock made a sudden rise, and on March 1, 1719–20, it is quoted at 175 to 178. Just before this Pope had proposed to Eckershall, his man of business, to buy,[1] and in a letter to Martha Blount which must have been written early in March, it appears that he had actually bought. He says:

"I have borrowed money on ours and Mr. Eckershall's orders, and bought £500 South Sea Stock at 180. It has since risen to 184. I wish us all good luck in it. I am very glad to have done what you seemed so desirous of."[2]

On the 1st of April, 1720, the price is quoted from 304 to 310, and on May 1st from 335 to 334. In April, or early in May, Pope writes to Caryll in the midst of the mania:

"The question you ask about the fair ladies' gains and my own is not easily answered. There is no gain till the Stock is sold, which neither theirs nor mine is. So that instead of wallowing in money, we never wanted more for the uses of life, which is a pretty general case with most of the adventurers, each having put all the ready money they had into the Stock, and our estate is an imaginary one only. One day we were worth two or three thousand, and the next not above three parts of the same. For my own particular I have very little in; the ladies are much richer than I, but how rich (as you see) there is no telling by any rules of arithmetic,

Pauperis est numerare pecus."

Hence it appears that Pope clearly understood the visionary nature of the speculation, but that having bought for himself and the Blounts when the stock was at a comparatively low price, he was content to let his stake lie and to wait what fortune would bring. On the 2nd of July the stock was sold at 950, and immediately afterwards the fall began. On the 2nd of September the price was 750; on the 13th September, 590, thence declining rapidly to 280 on the 3rd of October. Assuming that on the 23rd of September, the date of Pope's letter to Atterbury before cited, the price would have been

[1] Letter from Pope to Eckershall, Vol. X., p. 228.

[2] Letter from Pope to Martha Blount, Vol. X., p. 295.

about half way between the two figures last mentioned, *i.e.*, 430, Pope would, if he had then sold, have been worth about half what he imagined himself to be worth when the Stock was at its highest. On the other hand, he would of course still be a great gainer on the original purchase. Assuming the purchases in 1716 and in 1720 to have been equal, the average cost of the Stock bought at 103 and 180 would be 142. He might therefore fairly say that the half was more than the whole. Whether he had actually sold any of his Stock when he wrote to Atterbury does not appear, but that he and the Blounts still retained some as late as October 23rd, when the price was 235, is shown by the letter to Caryll of that date:

"To give you," he writes, "a friendly part in my private concerns, and those of your other friends, I must just tell you as to myself, that I am not hurt by these times or fates (which I think escaping well), and that your relations, the ladies in Bolton Street, are still gainers, even at the low ebb, and may be pretty considerably so, if there be but any moderate rise again."

The bursting of the Bubble produced serious effects, direct or indirect, within the circle of Pope's friendships. The first of these was the death of Secretary Craggs, a statesman for whom he had a strong regard, founded partly on similarity of tastes, partly on the goodwill that the latter had always manifested for him. He had once offered to pay the poet a pension of three hundred pounds a year out of the secret service money at his command. Pope declined the proposal with thanks, but said that he would apply to the Secretary for a hundred or even five hundred pounds if his wants should ever press him so far. He told Spence that Craggs had often suggested to him that he would thus be able to keep a 'coach,' but that though he himself was quite sensible of the convenience this would be to him, he reflected that it would be still more inconvenient to keep one and to be obliged to relinquish it if his friend's assistance should ever fail him.[1] Craggs had taken a house at Chiswick to be in Pope's neighbourhood, in 1717, and again at Twickenham in May, 1720. He died of

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' pp. 307-8.

small-pox on February 16, 1721. A short time before Pope addressed to him the complimentary lines at the close of the 'Epistle to Addison.' How far these were deserved is a question. The Secretary was not convicted of actual fraud, but his father, who was Postmaster-General, was proved to have received £40,000 Stock as a bribe. He died in a lethargic fit on the 16th of March, the night before the secret committee appointed by the House of Commons was to report on his case, and as it was found that he had realised £69,000 by his transactions in the South Sea, the rumour naturally spread that he had committed suicide. Pope, who was always a staunch friend, maintained the innocence of the Secretary. "There never lived," said he to Caryll in February, 1720–21, "a more worthy nature, a more disinterested mind, a more open and friendly temper, than Mr. Craggs. A little time I doubt not will clear up a character which the world will learn to value and admire when it has none such remaining in it."

Another person of importance in Pope's history appears in his correspondence in connection with the South Sea Bubble. One of the last letters he wrote to Lady M. W. Montagu was to advise her to buy some of the Stock. It is dated the 22nd of August, 1720, and says:

"MADAM,—I was made acquainted last night that I might depend upon it as a certain gain to buy the South Sea Stock at the present price, which will certainly rise in some weeks or less. I can be as sure of this as the nature of any such thing will allow, from the first and best hands,[1] and therefore have despatched the bearer with all speed to you."

Lady Mary was at this time a neighbour of Pope's at Twickenham. At his pressing request she and her husband had taken a house in the village, and she had sat to Sir Godfrey Kneller for her portrait. It may readily be imagined that the vicinity proved too close for a friendship based on unreal foundations. The lady's wit and the poet's gallantry were not found agreeable by either party in the intercourse of life. After 1719 only two letters seem to have passed between them, one of them being the poet's hurried missive urging the

[1] No doubt Secretary Craggs, who was then his neighbour.

purchase of South Sea Stock. No advice could have been more unfortunate. At the end of August the tide was in rapid ebb, and the Stock which then stood at 750 had sunk in December to 130! Close and money-loving as Lady Mary undoubtedly was, this incident, even if she did not act on information received 'from the first and best hands,' is not likely to have bettered her relations with Pope, who on his side, however, still maintained his former tone of gallantry. Since the beginning of the year he had been planning the alterations in his garden, and particularly the adornment of the grotto, or underground passage connecting his house and river-side lawn with his gardens on the other side of the London road.[1] When the alterations in the house were completed, Gay wrote him a congratulatory letter, and received, by way of answer, the well-known lines which were of course sent on, as was intended, to the person who had inspired them. Soon after the death of Craggs, Lady Mary, writing to her sister the Countess of Mar, says, after a reference to that event:

"I see sometimes Mr. Congreve, and very seldom, Mr. Pope, who continues to embellish his house at Twickenham. He has made a subterranean grotto, which he has furnished with looking-glasses, and they tell me it has a very good effect. I here send you some verses addressed to Mr. Gay, who wrote him a congratulatory letter on the finishing his house. I stifled them here, and I beg they may die the same death in Paris and never go farther than your closet:

Ah friend, 'tis true—this truth you lovers know—
In vain my structures rise, my gardens grow;
In vain fair Thames reflects the double scenes
Of hanging mountains, and of sloping greens:
Joy lives not here, to happier seats it flies,
And only dwells where Wortley casts her eyes.

What are the gay parterre, the chequered shade,
The morning bower, the evening colonnade,
But soft recesses of uneasy minds,
To sigh unheard in to the passing winds?
So the struck deer in some sequestered part
Lies down to die, the arrow at his heart;
There stretched unseen in coverts hid from day,
Bleeds drop by drop, and pants his life away."[2]

[1] The best description of the grotto is to be found in Pope's letter to E. Blount of June 2, 1725.

[2] Letter of Lady M. W. Montagu to the Countess of Mar of April or May, 1722 (Moy Thomas's edition of Works, vol. i., p. 461).

The South Sea scheme, fatal to the reputation of Pope's Whig friend Craggs, was also the cause of the exile of his Tory friend Atterbury. Pope had probably made the acquaintance of the latter in the last years of the reign of Queen Anne. Both were members of the Scriblerus Club, and the Bishop, whose taste was as fine as his learning was superficial, did not fail to appreciate keenly the genius of the rising poet, who on his side was glad to avail himself of Atterbury's critical sagacity. He sent him for consideration the Preface published with his volume of poems in 1717; he showed him too his juvenile epic 'Alcander,' though his memory failed him when in after years he told Spence that he had burned this work on the Bishop's advice;[1] they exchanged views on the merits of 'Gorboduc,' 'Paradise Regained,' 'Samson Agonistes,' 'Shakespeare,' and the 'Arabian Nights.' So strong was the sympathy between them that, on the death of Pope's father, the Bishop ventured to hint to his friend, whose conformity to the Roman Catholic religion he knew to be simply external, the expediency of joining the Anglican Church:

"You have it now in your power," said he, "to pursue that method of thinking and living which you like best. Give me leave, if I am not a little too early in my applications of this kind, to congratulate you upon it; and to assure you that there is no man living who wishes you better, or would be more pleased to contribute any ways to your satisfaction or service."[2]

Pope's reply is interesting and characteristic:

"My Lord,—I am truly obliged by your kind condolence on my father's death, and the desire you express that I should improve this incident to my advantage. I know your lordship's friendship to me is so extensive, that you include in that wish both my spiritual and temporal advantage; and it is what I owe to that friendship to open my mind unreservedly to you on this head. It is true I have lost a parent for whom no gains I could make would be any equivalent. But that was not my only tie: I thank God another still remains (and long may it remain) of the same tender nature. Genetrix est mihi; and excuse me if I say with Euryalus,

Nequeam lacrymas perferre parentis.

[1] See p. 16 of this volume. [2] Letter from Atterbury to Pope of Nov. 8, 1717.

A rigid divine may call it a carnal tie, but sure it is a virtuous one. At least I am more certain that it is a duty of nature to preserve a good parent's life and happiness, than I am of any speculative point whatever.

Ignaram hujus quodcunque pericli
Hanc ego nunc linquam?

For she, my lord, would think this separation more grievous than any other, and I for my part know as little as poor Euryalus did of the success of such an adventure; for an adventure it is, and no small one, in spite of the most positive divinity. Whether the change would be to my spiritual advantage, God only knows; this I know, that I mean as well in the religion I now profess, as I can possibly ever do in another. Can a man who thinks so justify a change, even if he thought both equally good? To such an one the part of *joining* with any one body of Christians might perhaps be easy, but I think it would not be so to *renounce* the other."[1]

Atterbury was a vehement Jacobite. On the death of Anne, seeing that prompt and courageous action was the sole hope of the cause he supported, he offered Ormonde to go to Charing Cross and proclaim the Pretender, in lawn sleeves. When he found that those who were of his party were too timid to take a decided course he made his peace, as far as he could, with the new dynasty, but being coldly received, he bided his time till events should make it possible for him to move in favour of the exiled Stuarts. The opportunity he sought offered itself in the social confusion caused by the financial crash of 1720.

At the first proposal of the scheme the Bishop imagined that it would greatly strengthen the position of the House of Hanover, from the number of investors who would be involved in the fortunes of a Company possessing a national guarantee, but, when the speculative mania began to prevail, he foresaw, as Pope's letter of September 23, 1720, shows, the approaching catastrophe. Through the year 1721 he was engaged in a secret correspondence with the Pretender's Ministers in France, information of which having been sent by the Regent to the English Ministry, Atterbury was arrested, carried with his papers before the Privy Council on August 22, 1722, and

[1] Letter from Pope to Atterbury of Nov. 20, 1717.

afterwards committed to the Tower. Though there is now no doubt of his treasonable conduct, the evidence against him was slight, consisting chiefly of letters in which the names were assumed, and of which the authorship was inferred simply from similarity of handwriting. Such as it was, however, it was difficult to explain away, and the Bishop seems to have resolved to rest the strength of his case on the improbability of the charge, pleading the illness and death of his wife, the buildings on which he was engaged, and the multiplicity of his ecclesiastical occupations, as proof of the exhaustive manner in which his time was engaged. To confirm his assertions of the innocence of his pursuits he called several witnesses, and among them Pope. "I know not," he writes to the latter on April 10, 1723, "but I may call upon you at my hearing to say somewhat about my way of spending my time at the Deanery which did not seem calculated towards managing plots and conspiracies."

On the 8th of May Pope was accordingly called as witness on Atterbury's behalf before the House of Lords. The summary of his evidence is given by Serjeant Wynne, Atterbury's counsel, in the report of the trial. He had to show that though for two or three years past he had been more constantly in the Bishop's company than any other person, in the Deanery and at Bromley, he had never heard him break off a conversation at his entrance, never heard him drop a word of what was imputed to him, but often known him utter sentiments of a contrary kind.[1] Little as he had to say, he made but a poor witness. The first row of lords before whom he stood were mostly of his acquaintance, but he lost his self-possession, and, as he acknowledged to Spence, made two or three blunders in his evidence.[2] He remained to listen to the Bishop's speech in his own defence, which extended over two hours, and was admirable for its eloquence, dignity, and pathos, but did not prevent the

[1] 'State Trials,' vol. xvi., pp. 584–5.
[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 156.

Bill of Pains and Penalties directed against him from passing by a majority of eighty-three to forty-three. On June 18th in this year Atterbury left England never to return. He spent some time quietly in Brussels, in order to encourage the belief widely entertained in England, at least among the Tory party, that he had been unjustly condemned; and then joined the Court of the Chevalier at Paris. To Pope at parting he gave his Bible, which the poet in 1739 presented to Ralph Allen. Two letters from Atterbury to Pope, after the former had gone into exile, are preserved; one, very pathetic, mentioning the death of his daughter, Mrs. Morice, and the other written the year before his death, and full of that touching eloquence which had moved the House of Lords in 1723.

"After all," says he, "I do and must love my country, with all its faults and blemishes; even that part of the constitution which wounded me unjustly, through my side, shall ever be dear to me. My last wish shall be like that of Father Paul, *Esto perpetua*. And when I die at a distance from it, it will be in the same manner as Virgil describes the expiring Peloponnesian,

"Sternitur—et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos." [1]

Pope always maintained Atterbury's innocence, and probably believed in it. His correspondence with Lord Harcourt, published for the first time in this edition, explains the cause of his confusion when called as a witness in the Bishop's behalf. He fully expected that the counsel for the prosecution would cross-examine him as to his religion, and he consulted Lord Harcourt beforehand as to the answer it would be proper for him to give.[2] His apprehensions on the subject were probably quickened by his recent experiences of the suspicions to which he was exposed as a Roman Catholic. Out of kindness to the Duchess of Buckingham, he had undertaken to edit her late husband's works, and Barber, the printer, had procured from Lord Carteret, the Secretary of State, a royal

[1] Letter from Atterbury to Pope of November 23, 1731.

[2] Letter from Pope to Lord Harcourt of May 5, 1723.

licence to protect the copyright. Before the book appeared it was discovered that it contained passages in favour of the Pretender, whereupon the Ministers who were at the time engaged in prosecuting all who had been involved in Atterbury's plot caused the entire impression to be seized, the offending passages to be cut out, and the book to be returned in its mutilated condition to the publisher. Pope was blamed for concealing the fact that a work, for which the King's licence had been asked, contained passages directed against the King's title. Morbidly anxious as he was to avoid all political entanglements, it is highly improbable that he was aware of the treasonable contents of the book, which he had no doubt edited in a very superficial manner. In a letter on the subject which he immediately wrote to Lord Carteret, he protested his loyalty, and declared that when the printer obtained the licence, he himself had not even looked at the papers.[1] This assertion is, however, scarcely to be trusted, as it is contradicted by a letter from him to Caryll, written apparently about the time when he undertook to edit Shakespeare, and before the issue of the royal licence.[2]

His edition of Shakespeare had been undertaken about the beginning of the year 1722. He made an agreement with Tonson for a reward, says Johnson, of £217 12*s*., to produce an edition of the poet, revising the text, and correcting the stage directions. Fenton and Gay assisted him in his work, the former receiving £30 14*s*. The minute, mechanical examination which the enterprise required was little suited to the broad and generalising genius of Pope's criticism, nor did he approach his task in that spirit of sympathy with his author which just editing requires. He altered some expressions in the text because they seemed to him vulgar; and others because the versification did not conform to his ideas of harmony. Comparatively little of his labour was spent in

[1] Letter from Pope to Lord Carteret of Feb. 16, 1722-3.

[2] Letter from Pope to Caryll, Vol. VI., p. 280.

research, but some of the conjectural emendations were happy, and the Preface to the edition, written in his best style,—and his critical prose is always excellent,—deserves the high commendation that Johnson bestows upon it. No edition, indeed, had hitherto been produced which could deserve the name of critical, for Rowe, Pope's only predecessor of importance, had not even taken the trouble to collate the folios and quartos. "Pope," says Johnson, "was the first that knew, at least the first that told, by what helps the text might be improved. If he inspected the early editions negligently, he taught others to be more accurate." The work, consisting of six volumes quarto, was completed in October, 1724, but was not published till March, 1725. Its chief claim to interest at the present day is that it forms the immediate starting-point for the long succession of Pope's satires. In 1726 Theobald published his pamphlet entitled "Shakespeare Restored, or a specimen of the many errors committed and unamended, by Mr. Pope in his late edition." The vexation caused to the poet by the undoubted justice of many of Theobald's strictures, procured for the latter the unwelcome honour of being recognised as the King of the Dunces, and coupled with Bentley's disparaging mention of the Translation of the 'Iliad,' provoked the many contemptuous allusions to verbal criticism in Pope's later satires.

I come now to the strange and characteristic history of the joint translation of the 'Odyssey,' by Pope, Fenton, and Broome. Ruffhead relates, and Spence seems to confirm the report,[1] that Fenton and Broome had already begun the work, and that Pope hearing of it said that he would join them. But this story is entirely inconsistent with the tenor of the correspondence between Pope and Broome, where, in the very first letter on the subject, Pope appears as the presiding spirit assigning parts and issuing orders to his associates, while Broome, in his final account of the history of their agreement,

[1] Ruffhead's 'Life of Pope,' pp. 205–6; Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 326.

never utters a word to insinuate that Pope thrust himself into a partnership which was not of his own suggesting.

His two assistants were close friends and had certain points of resemblance to each other, though their characters as a whole were very different. Both were members of the same University, both good scholars, both finished versifiers, both tall and corpulent. Here however the resemblance ceased. Elijah Fenton, born in 1683, was a member of an ancient family in Staffordshire. Having to make his way in the world, he was sent to Cambridge to finish his education, but, his conscience not allowing him to take the oath of allegiance to the Government after the expulsion of the legitimate King, he left the University without taking his Master's degree. He afterwards supported himself mainly by tuition. At one time he was assistant master at a school in Surrey; at another at one in Kent. Pope recommended him as a tutor to Craggs, the Secretary at War, who was anxious to acquire a knowledge of the classics, and after the death of the latter procured for him another charge in the family of Lady Judith Trumbull, widow of William III.'s old Secretary of State. He seems to have been one of those beings who are generally and perhaps rather selfishly beloved, because, while known to possess fine powers, they make little effort to use them in their own behalf. His poems, which occasionally show glimpses of genius, exhibit his character much in the same light as his letters to Broome, suggesting something of Swift's contempt for mankind, mixed with a general kindliness and benevolence, and a strong vein of religious feeling. Like other fat men he was singularly lazy, and Pope seems to have been under some apprehension that he would not exert himself to perform his portion of the task. "A woman," says Johnson, "that once waited on him in a lodging, told him, as she said, that he would lie a-bed, and be fed with a spoon."

"The lazy Mr. Fenton," writes Broome to Pope, "has obeyed your commands, and wrote for the notes in a huge long letter of at least three lines. I am now in hopes he will not lose the use of writing

and speaking. I will tell you a true story: When he was with me at Sturston he often fished; this gave him an opportunity of sitting still, and being silent; but he left it off because the fish bit. He could not bear the fatigue of pulling up the rod and baiting the hook." [1]

William Broome was himself a much more commonplace person. He was the son of a farmer in Cheshire, and was five or six years younger than Fenton.

"At his college" [St. John's College, Cambridge], says Johnson, "he lived for some time in the same chamber with the well-known Ford, by whom I have formerly heard him described as a contracted scholar and a mere versifier, unacquainted with life, and unskilful in conversation. His addiction to metre was such that his companions familiarly called him Poet. When he had opportunities of mingling with mankind he cleared himself, as Ford likewise owned, from great part of his scholastic rust." [2]

Unlike Fenton he never felt the pressure of poverty, for before he was thirty he had obtained the Rectorship of Sturston in Suffolk, and had married a rich widow. Unlike Fenton, he was bustling, industrious, talkative, and anxious for literary fame. Fenton's character, in spite of his indolence, was resolute and inflexible where principle was concerned; Broome, with great amiability, had no power of moral resistance, and in the transactions over the 'Odyssey' proved the supple, though unwilling, tool of an intellect more powerful than his own. He possessed no spark of genius, but was an admirable imitator of other men's style. Pope afterwards classified him with cruel justice among "the parrots who repeat another's words in such a hoarse odd voice, as makes them seem their own." [3]

The work was divided between the partners as follows: Fenton translated the first, the fourth, the nineteenth, and twentieth books; Broome undertook the second, the sixth, the eighth, the eleventh, the twelfth, the sixteenth, the eighteenth

[1] Letter from Broome to Pope of January 2, 1725–26.

[2] Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets'—'Broome.'

[3] The Bathos, chapter vi.

and the twenty-third, with all the notes; while Pope charged himself with all that remained. Pope seems to have exercised a certain amount of supervision in the apportionment of the earlier books, and probably assigned his task to Fenton, who was too lazy to make any objection. Broome writes to Fenton, May 29, 1722, "I have finished three books,—2, 11, 12,—and if either you or Mr. Pope presume to touch 16, 18, and 23, I will punish you and desire you to write your own notes upon them." He groaned over the second book at starting, and Pope, who seems to have set out in high spirits, promised to relieve him of the third and of listening to old Nestor's long stories. Bad health, however, depressed him as he proceeded. "What I have done," he writes to Broome on October 3, 1723, "in my present task of Homer, I think is not quite so spirited as I could wish," and on August 16, 1724, he says of his translation of the fourteenth book: "I never laboured through anything so heavily, and have undertaken I know not what." Fenton was as usual indolent, and often behindhand with his work.

Pope had intended to issue his paper of Proposals in February, 1723, but was hindered by the scandal arising out of his edition of the Duke of Buckingham's works. The cry raised against him on this occasion was so loud that, acting on Lord Harcourt's advice, he postponed pushing his subscription till a more convenient season, which he did not judge to have arrived till August, 1724. On the 16th of that month he wrote to Broome: "I have before told you that whatever subscriptions your own interest can procure, I look upon as your own money. Therefore enrich yourself as fast as you can that way, as I will do on my part by my particular interest with others."

Unlike the translation of the 'Iliad,' therefore, a very considerable portion of the translation of the 'Odyssey' was actually completed before any public subscription was set on foot or any agreement made with a publisher. Formidable difficulties were encountered in the latter respect.

"Mr. Pope visited me here last Sunday," writes Fenton to Broome, January 9, 1723-4, "and told me that you intended to come into these parts this month, which we both, as well as Sir Clement Cottrell, are of opinion will be very unseasonable, and will in all probability renew the suspicions that are already in town about the triple alliance; and the affairs of Greece are already so perplexed and uncertain that they will not need any additional circumstances to sink their proceeding. Tonson does not care to contract for the copy, and application has been made to Lintot, upon which he exerts the true spirit of a scoundrel, believing that he has Pope entirely at his mercy."

Whatever Lintot may have believed, Pope undoubtedly made a very good bargain for himself. The publisher was to furnish the subscribers' copies for nothing, as he had done with the 'Iliad,' and to pay £600 for the copyright instead of £1200 as on the former occasion. As the edition was to consist only of five volumes, against six of the 'Iliad;' as only part of these was to come from the hand of Pope; and as it was, at the time when the agreement was made, uncertain how many copies would have to be furnished free; it cannot be said that this contract showed any stinginess on the part of Lintot. Pope however, who was exceedingly nervous after his misadventure over the Duke of Buckingham's book, no doubt judged with an irritable mind the natural hesitation of the bookseller and possessed Fenton with his own opinion. Both of them felt that it was important to keep Broome, whose vain and chattering temper they understood, away from Lintot till the agreement had been completed. When the difficulty with the publisher was overcome and the private subscription list closed, still further delay was caused by the illness of the poet's mother.

"I troubled your lordship," he writes to Lord Oxford, on December 12, 1724, "with a few lines at a time when I just expected to lose the most valuable thing I had in the world—a tender parent. . . . Since that time I have been so happy as to see her still alive, though in a weak and languishing condition, which, at so advanced an age as hers, we are yet obliged to call a recovery. God knows for how little a time he lends her to me; long it cannot be; and I am still in constant attendance upon her in the country, excepting one day that I stole to town, more I assure you in hope of finding you there, with one or two of those whom I most value than from any other motive;

though, if ever I attend my subscription, I must do it now, the time of publication drawing so nigh, and I not having, through this unfortunate accident, yet published the Proposals to the town."

The Proposals were at last issued on January 10, 1724-5. It is evident that from the first Pope looked on the Translation merely in the light of a profitable undertaking. He knew that Fenton and Broome had sufficiently mastered the mechanism of his style to be almost as skilful versifiers as himself, and concluding that the public, if unenlightened on the subject, would be unable to distinguish their work from his, and would imagine that his assistants were merely to be employed, as Broome had been employed in the translation of the 'Iliad,' in a subordinate capacity, he sought to impress on his associates the necessity of keeping silence as to their respective shares in the translation. The indolent Fenton, indifferent about fame, and never overburdened with money, needed little argument to persuade him of the soundness of this view. With Broome, who was vain of his association with the first poet of the day, in so honourable a labour, his task was more difficult, and it is amusing to observe the ingenious considerations by which Pope sought to check the flow of his partner's loquacity. Most men, he tells Broome, have enemies, and he may be sure that he is no exception; if he will only keep silence, he will find these praising Broome's verse under the belief that it is Pope's, and abusing Pope's supposing it to be Broome's. "I cannot but smile," he continues, "to think how envy and prejudice will be disappointed, if they find things which they have been willing, or forced, to applaud as belonging to one man, to be the just praise of another whom they have a malignity to. I would, I protest to God, at any time gladly part with anything that was my own, to see this confusion in these fellows."[1]

When on the eve of issuing his Proposals he repeats his advice in a different form:

[1] Letter from Pope to Broome of October 3, 1723.

"I think I need not recommend to you further the necessity of keeping this whole matter to yourself, as I am very sure Fenton has done, lest the least air of it prejudice with the town. But if you judge otherwise, I do not prohibit you taking to yourself your due share of fame. Take your choice also in that. . . . The public is both an unfair and a silly judge unless it be trepanned into justice."[1]

The inference he meant Broome to draw was that the public would be forced unawares into appreciating Broome's verse, if it supposed it might be Pope's. Broome, however, was too vain to follow advice of which he saw the sagacity. "He wished Pope," he said, "to proceed in the affair of Homer, as if there was no person concerned in it but Pope himself;"[2] but he acted in such a way as to render this course impossible, by talking abroad of the important part that he had himself performed in it.

"It is you yourself," writes Pope to him in a tone of vexation, "who have altered the case. I must therefore give the world the hint that it is not obliged to me only for this undertaking, *coûte qui coûte*. All I can do in honour is not to let them into the particulars, what parts of it are, or are not mine. That I leave to you at your own time to do; but to deal plainly with you I think, for your own interest, you have chosen a wrong one, in being so early in it."[3]

In the Proposals Pope therefore said, making his language as ambiguous as possible:

"The benefit of this proposal is not solely for my own use, but for that of two of my friends who have assisted me in this work. One of them enjoins me to conceal his name; the other is the Rev. Mr. Broome, whose assistance I have formerly acknowledged in many of the notes and extracts annexed to my translation of the 'Iliad.'"

The first three books of the translation were published in April, 1725, and the publication was almost immediately followed by a controversy between Pope and Lintot. According to the agreement the latter was to furnish Pope with all the copies he might require for his subscribers free of charge, and

[1] Letter from Pope to Broome of November, 1724.

[2] Letter of Pope to Broome of December 4, 1724.

[3] Ibid.

Pope had promised Broome the benefit of as many subscriptions as he could procure for himself. In order to keep within the strict letter of the agreement, Pope had told Broome to send the names of his particular subscribers to him at Twickenham; and Lintot on the other hand, when required to send copies to these subscribers, seems to have protested, on the ground that he had only stipulated to supply Pope's subscribers. A lawsuit was threatened, but the storm blew over, only however to be followed by loud complaints, many of which appeared in the newspapers of the day, against the mean appearance of the edition (the two last volumes of which appeared in June, 1726), the badness of the paper, and the want of margin: "I have a great admiration," said a writer in the 'London Journal' of July 17, 1726, "for this admired poet, and also for his ingenious bookseller, but I hope they will not always hope to impose extravagant prices upon us for bad paper, old types, and journey work poetry."

Previous protests of the same kind, which were what he had always feared, had already caused Pope to take a decisive step. In December, 1725, Fenton had written to Broome expressing his regret that the latter had settled not to come to town till the spring. It was very necessary, said Fenton, that there should be a meeting of all the partners to settle accounts, and decide "what was to be said at the end of the last volume with relation to the coadjutors of the work." Broome, who was afraid of Pope, hoped that this business might have been arranged between the poet and Fenton without any intervention on his part. Fenton, however, disappointed his hopes by declining to act by himself, and Broome, afterwards being brought alone face to face with Pope, was persuaded to set his hand to a note which was eventually published at the end of the translation. He could not have given a more remarkable proof of the ascendancy which Pope had gained over his mind. He had shirked the interview in the winter, when he might have had Fenton's assistance in enforcing their just claims on Pope, and he was now persuaded by the poet to

make in his own person a declaration which was equivalent to a falsehood, and a falsehood which involved Fenton, without any knowledge on his part, as a partner in the fraud. "If my performance," he says in the note, "has merit either in these [*i.e.* the notes] or in any part of the translation, namely the sixth, eleventh, and eighteenth books, it is but just to attribute it to the judgment and care of Mr. Pope, by whose hand every sheet was corrected. His other, and much more able assistant, was Mr. Fenton in the fourth and the twentieth books." Thus he seemed to deprive himself of the credit to which he was entitled for the translation of the second, eighth, twelfth, sixteenth, and twenty-third books, and Fenton of the first and the nineteenth. He went on to say that if their share "had the good fortune not to be distinguished from Mr. Pope's, we ought to be the less vain, since the resemblance proceeds much less from our diligence and study to copy his manner, than from his own daily revisal and correction." Fenton's comment to Broome on this misleading statement is as good an illustration of his character, as the note itself is of Broome's:

"I had always so ill an opinion of your post-scribing to the 'Odyssey' that I was not surprised with anything in it but the mention of my own name, which heartily vexes me, and is, I think, a license that deserves a worse epithet than I have it in my nature to give it. I was in a pretty confusion at Cambridge, when Dr. Newcome told me of it, after I had retired to the extremest brink of veracity, to decline the suspicion of being concerned in the undertaking. But let it go."[1]

Broome's motive for deceiving the public as to the number of books translated by himself and Fenton is not very clear. He had told Fenton in December, 1725: "Be assured Mr. Pope will not let us divide—I fear not give us our due share of honour. He is a Cæsar in poetry, and will bear no equal." In this opinion he misconstrued Pope's motives, who was not particularly solicitous about the glory to be derived from the translation, which he knew could never equal what his

[1] Letter from Fenton to Broome of August 7, 1726.

'Iliad' had brought him, but who was anxious for the finan success of the enterprise. He probably supposed that in c plying with the poet's wishes, and in prostrating himself be him in his postscript, he would be repaid with some s glowing panegyric as his literary vanity craved for. W nothing of the sort appeared, and he saw that he had been m a dupe, he was exceedingly angry, though he was too timid break openly with Pope. The latter on his side suspected t Broome had set in motion many of the reports to his disadv tage, and, when he published the 'Bathos,' he took his reve by introducing the initials W. B. among the bad poets classi in that treatise under the heads of parrots and tortoises. T was too much even for Broome's tameness. He discontin the correspondence he had hitherto maintained with Po nevertheless, when the latter appealed to him in 1730 to cl his fame from the slanderous imputations cast on him by authors of the 'One Epistle,' his softness would not allow l to send a stern reply, and the friendly correspondence betw the two was resumed almost on its old footing.

The charge made against Pope in the libel just mentio was that he had underpaid his assistants.

> "By tricks sustained, in poet craft complete,
> Retire triumphant to thy Twickenham seat,
> That seat the work of half-paid drudging Broome,
> And called by joking Tritons Homer's tomb."

This accusation was not altogether just. The remunerat of Fenton and Broome was indeed far from magnific With the sum paid by Lintot the total amount received the 'Odyssey' was £4500, out of which Pope reserved himself over £3700—an undoubtedly large proportion. On other hand it is to be remembered that the design was all own; that its attractiveness depended entirely on the pres of his name; that the great bulk of the subscribers had b obtained by the exertions of himself and his agents. He l warned his partners from the first that he expected them

perform cheap service. Broome, who was in easy circumstances, was chiefly moved by a vain craving for literary fame, and a sense of the advantage he would reap from the association of his name with Pope's: Fenton was in all probability paid at about the rate his work would have commanded from a publisher. The Rector of Sturston received £500, as well as £70 arising from the subscriptions he had himself collected: while, as Broome says that Fenton was paid in the same proportion to himself, the latter must have received for his four books £200.

So thoroughly had the assistants mastered the secret of Pope's style, that, as Johnson says, the world has been unable to detect any substantial difference in the work of the different hands. Those indeed who know the books translated by Pope will observe many terms and idioms which mark the style of an original poet, but the greater part of the translation is accomplished with extraordinary evenness. As a translation, it must be generally felt to be inferior to the 'Iliad.' It is perhaps closer to the exact sense of the original. On the other hand the character of the 'Odyssey' is far less suited to the genius of Pope than is its companion poem. It has comparatively little direct action, much less variety of character, fewer passages dependent on patriotic sentiment and lofty rhetoric. Where the 'Iliad' is sublime the 'Odyssey' is romantic and picturesque, and Pope's style was not adapted to shine in this species of imaginative writing, which requires rather the selection of vivid and picturesque Saxon words, than the rhetorical Latin terms which—un-Homeric as they are—are used so effectively by the translator in the speeches of the 'Iliad.' Where the action is lofty and exciting he shows his old spirit, as in the adventure with the Cyclops, but the tamer part of the narrative, such as the episode of the swineherd Eumæus, gave little scope for anything but straightforward narrative, in which the heroic couplet is apt to appear laboured and artificial.

It is pleasant to turn aside from the picture of double-

dealing in the matter of the 'Odyssey,' exhibited in the correspondence with Broome, to those glimpses of Pope's private life at this period, in which he appears as the tender son, the agreeable companion, and the charitable benefactor. During the years 1724–1726 his chief correspondent appears to have been Edward, Earl of Oxford, who succeeded his father on May 21, 1724. He resembled the Lord Treasurer in his indolence and love of letters, but he was entirely without his abilities, and though his collection of manuscripts was magnificent, he regarded them merely in the light of curiosities. His letters, however, show him to have been truly kind-hearted, generous, and simple-minded. Pope had a real regard for him, though he was not blind to the sluggish apathy the Earl displayed in the management of his private affairs, which caused him, without any of the tastes of a spendthrift, to squander, in some unexplained manner, the splendid fortune he had received with his wife, the daughter of the Duke of Newcastle.

From Pope's correspondence with this nobleman we find that in 1725 his mother was so ill that he was in constant expectation of her death. In his attention to her wants he seems to have been unwearied, rarely leaving the house, though the confinement must have been detrimental to his own health, which was at this time very precarious; nor was he able to pay any of those visits at country houses, like Riskins and Down Hall, with which as a rule he so agreeably relieved his labours. His feelings during her illness are touchingly expressed in the letter to Lord Oxford, dated December 12, 1724, which has been already quoted.[1]

Within a year after this letter was written he had to report the death of another member of the little household to whom he was strongly attached:

"I did not leave your lordship," he writes to the Earl of Oxford on November 7, 1725, "without a painful desire of returning to wait on you again. I say a painful one because I knew the condition of my

[1] See p. 199.

sick family would not allow me, so soon as I apprehended you would be going out of town. Accordingly my poor old nurse, who has lived in constant attendance and care of me ever since I was an infant at her breast, died the other day. I think it a fine verse that of your friend, Mr. Prior:

> And by his side
> A good man's greatest loss, a faithful servant died;

and I do not think one of my own an ill one speaking of a nurse:

> The tender second to a mother's cares.—*Hom. Odyss.* 7.

Surely this sort of friend is not the least; and this sort of relation, when continued through life, superior to most that we call so."

To Mary Beach he erected the tablet which may be still seen in Twickenham parish church.

Besides these griefs and anxieties he was troubled with scandalous reports affecting his honour and reputation. For some years past he had ceased to correspond with Teresa Blount, and at the close of 1725 we have a glimpse of the cause of that bitter hostility he afterwards exhibits towards her both in his letters and in his verse.

"A very confident asseveration," says he in a letter to Caryll, dated December 25, 1725, "has been made, which has spread over the town that your god-daughter, Miss Patty, and I, lived two or three years since in a manner that was reported to you as giving scandal to many; that upon your writing to me upon it, I consulted with her, and sent you an excusive alleviating answer, but did after that, privately and of myself, write to you a full confession how much I myself disapproved the way of life, and owning the prejudice done her, charging it on herself, and declaring that I wished to break off what I acted against my conscience, &c.; and that she, being at the same time spoken to by a lady of your acquaintance at your instigation, did absolutely deny to alter any part of her conduct, were it ever so disreputable or exceptionable. Upon this villainous lying tale, it is farther added by the same hand that I brought her acquainted with a noble lord, and into an intimacy with some others, merely to get quit of her myself, being moved in consciousness by what you and I had conferred together, and playing this base part to get off."

The report was improbable in itself, and Pope's indignant denial, which in its directness differs essentially from the equivocating methods to which he resorted on other occasions, when conscious of guilt, may be accepted as satisfactorily dis-

posing of the calumny afterwards revived by Bowles. A letter from Mrs. Caryll to Martha Blount, preserved at Maple-durham, also expresses the fullest conviction of that lady and her husband of the groundlessness of the accusation.[1] Whether Pope was justified in concluding that Teresa Blount was the propagator of the scandal it is impossible to say, though it can have been circulated only by one who was intimately acquainted with both Caryll and Pope. Teresa's character seems to have been bolder and more masculine than Martha's; her temper, as far as we can gather it from Pope's correspondence was haughty and capricious; she was apparently inclined to be a devotee in religion; and, if Pope's letters to her in 1717 have been rightly interpreted, she had rejected with disdain his proposal to her for the hand of her sister. It is difficult however, to suppose that she would have been so base as to injure Martha's reputation out of spite to Pope, and it consists better with probability and the poet's own character to conclude, that his belief as to the authorship of the scandal was a mere suspicion springing out of a long and rooted dislike.

Amidst all his labours and anxieties his charity was not idle. His correspondence with Caryll at this period contains frequent mention of a Mrs. Cope, in whose unhappy history he was deeply interested. This lady was the wife of Captain Cope, an officer who had served under Marlborough, and was afterwards stationed with his regiment at Port Mahon. Mrs. Cope remained in England, and her husband contracted a bigamous marriage abroad with one Eulalia Morell. The deserted wife, with the assistance of her friends in 1720, made two journeys to Port Mahon to endeavour to obtain recognition from her husband, but in vain, and on her return home the second time she was obliged to settle in a very destitute condition in France. Here she was supported by the kindness of a few friends, among whom Pope was the most active. She had been introduced to him in 1711 by Caryll, whose first

[1] Carruthers' 'Life of Pope,' p. 230.

cousin she was, and he was charmed with her wit, vivacity, and good sense.[1] He seems to have contributed to help her £20 a year from the time of her settlement in France till her death; and not content with aiding her himself, he exerted himself warmly to interest others, notably the Abbé Southcote and Robert Arbuthnot, in her behalf. She lingered on in great necessity and suffering—she had cancer in her breast—till May, 1728, when she died at Bar-sur-Aube, the expense to which she was put for surgeons and necessaries in her last illness having been defrayed by Pope.

In 1726 the poet lost his friend Robert Digby. He was the second son of the fifth Lord Digby, and was for some time heir apparent to the title; but his health was always wretched, and from Gay's poem on Pope's return from Greece we gather that anything like loudness or coarseness was intolerable to his fastidious refinement. A member of Magdalen College, Oxford, he had rooms there in which Pope lodged in his frequent excursions to the University, while he was engaged on the translation of Homer. Like Lord Bathurst he had an intense love of the country, but a love of the meditative, philosophic kind, very different from the vigorous delight in the open air characteristic of the sporting and planting proprietor of Oakley. One of Pope's best letters,—that to Martha Blount describing Sherborne,—was written from his house,[2] and it is noteworthy that in the letters to Digby are to be found the two passages in Pope's writings which disclose the most genuinely poetical feeling for Nature. One is the description of Spring at Twickenham:

"Our river glitters beneath an unclouded sun, at the same time that its banks retain the verdure of showers; our gardens are offering their first nosegays; our trees, like new acquaintance brought happily together, are stretching their arms to meet each other, and growing nearer and nearer every hour; the birds are paying their thanksgiving songs for the new habitations I have made them."[3]

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of July 19, 1711.

[2] Vol. IX., p. 300.

[3] Letter from Pope to Digby of May 1, 1720.

The other is in praise of Autumn, and shows that th lessons he had taken in painting had not been lost upon h taste:

"Do not talk of the decay of the year; the season is good when th people are so. It is the best time in the year for a painter; there more variety of colours in the leaves; the prospects begin to ope through the thinner woods over the valleys, and through the hig canopies of trees to the higher arch of heaven: the dews of th morning impearl every thorn, and scatter diamonds on the verda mantle of the earth; the frosts are fresh and wholesome: what wou you have? The moon shines too, though not for lovers these co nights, but for astronomers." [1]

A fervent admiration for Pope breathes through all Digby letters, which the poet repaid with real affection. There genuine feeling in the epitaph which he inscribed on the monu ment in Sherborne Church to the memory of Robert and h sister Mary. The former died on the 19th or 20th of Ma 1726; Mary, a favourite sister, whose activity and gaiety a alluded to in the correspondence, survived him till 1729, whe she died of the small-pox.

[1] Letter from Pope to Digby of October 10, 1723.

CHAPTER X.

THE WAR WITH THE DUNCES.

The 'Miscellanies'—The Origin of the 'Dunciad'—Its motives as described by Cleland and Savage—Its real motives—Pope's causes of quarrel with the various persons satirised—The Grub Street Journal.

1726—1737.

POPE'S career up to this point had been a signal proof of the growing power of literature in English society. By his religion he was completely barred from all advancement in the path of politics, which had brought Addison and other men of letters to various degrees of fortune and position. He had early perceived that whatever success he might ultimately obtain must be won by pleasing the public taste and imagination, and towards this object he had pressed with admirable patience and resolution. His labours on the translation of Homer had brought him a pecuniary return hitherto unexampled in the history of literature. The son of an obscure tradesman, he was welcomed as a friend and equal by the most distinguished members of an aristocracy as proud as any in Europe. But a triumph so unprecedented could hardly be won without an almost equivalent amount of loss and vexation. The men of letters who had failed to secure equal favours from the public were naturally disinclined to ascribe Pope's success entirely to his superior merit. Some of them could carry their recollections back to the time when Oldham had written his 'Satire dissuading from Poetry'; when the author of 'Hudibras' had died in want of the necessaries of life; when Milton had received the merest pittance for 'Paradise Lost'; and when Dryden had been forced to support himself by the fawning flattery of noble patrons.[1] Some again disliked Pope

[1] Dennis's Remarks on Pope's Homer, 1717.

on account of his religion: others had received from him some personal cause of offence: all of them were ready to make use of any weapon which could lower his character or genius in public esteem. On the other hand, the poet's self-love and ambition had been enormously increased by success, and a temper, from childhood impatient of opposition, was now super-sensitively alive to all criticism which was calculated to make his countrymen's judgment of his merits less favourable than his own. Though, like many other men of similar disposition, he had a profound conviction of the excellence of his own motives, his rancour against his enemies was doubtless embittered by a sense that there was an element of justice in the criticism passed on his edition of Shakespeare, and on his conduct to his partners and to the public in the translation of the 'Odyssey.' Thus with Genius, Vanity, Spleen, and Suspicion on one side, and Failure, Envy and Malignity on the other, all the materials were accumulating for the outbreak of the great literary war which culminated in the publication of the 'Dunciad.' The history of the war is full of incidents illustrative of human nature, and of the respective characters of Pope and his enemies.

Evidence is not wanting to show that the first conception of the 'Dunciad' had been formed as early as 1720; and it is certain that in 1725 Pope had completed a satire in which, under cover of correcting the taste of the town in wit and criticism, he made severe personal attacks upon his critics or rivals.[1] Swift, then in Ireland, questioned the wisdom of these sallies. "Take care," said he, "the bad poets do not outwit you, as they have the good ones in every age, whom they have provoked to transmit their names to posterity. Mævius is as well known as Virgil, and Gildon will be as well known as you if his name gets into your verses."[2] The poet appeared to be convinced. "I am much the happier," he replied, "for

[1] See Pope's letter to Swift, October 15, 1725.

[2] Letter from Swift to Pope November 26, 1725.

finding (a better thing than our wits) our judgments jump in the notion that all scribblers should be passed by in silence. . . . So let Gildon and Philips rest in peace!"[1]

Swift was wise at a distance; nevertheless it was Swift who, by his own confession, was eventually the main cause of the publication of the 'Dunciad.'[2] In the summer of 1726 the Dean came over to England carrying with him the MS. of 'Gulliver;' and, being entertained for four months by Pope at Twickenham, he was brought within the circle of all the literary interests and antipathies of the latter. It was resolved between them that they would combine to publish in a Miscellany such of their writings in prose and verse as might seem worth preserving. The author of 'Gulliver,' on his return to Ireland in the autumn, told Pope that he was "mustering all the little things in verse that he thought might be safely printed," and he afterwards sent him a parcel of these with full powers to burn, blot, or correct them just as he thought fit.[3] A similar selection of Pope's writings had evidently been made during Swift's visit at Twickenham, and among them, Pope tells us in his authoritative account of the publication of the 'Dunciad,' was the rough draft of that poem, which the author, in pretended compliance with his friend's earlier judgment, was condemning to the fire, when Swift, snatching it from its fate, urged him to proceed with it.

The first two volumes of the Miscellanies were printed by Benjamin Motte in June, 1727; the third, though ready for publication, was kept back,—I entertain not the least doubt—in anticipation of the appearance of the 'Dunciad.' When Savage, at the instigation of Pope, published the authorised history of the 'Dunciad,' he declared that it was written in retaliation for the attacks made on the author in consequence of the publication of the 'Bathos.' As a matter of fact, we know that the satire was practically finished when the third

[1] Letter from Pope to Swift of December 14, 1725.

[2] See Introduction to the 'Dunciad,' Vol. IV., p. 5.

[3] Letters from Swift to Pope of October 15 and December 5, 1726.

volume of the Miscellanies, containing the 'Bathos,' was p lished in March, 1727-8. The point of the 'Dunciad' la its personality, and Pope knew that a satire of this kind c only be justified if it was supposed to be a weapon of s defence. To propagate this belief, he laid a plot marked his usual subtlety and niceness of calculation. The 'Bath is, as a whole, an admirable piece of general satire, writte the ironical vein of Martinus Scriblerus, with great livelin and in a spirit of perfectly legitimate literary criticism. chapter however, obviously inserted for the purpose of in tion, was devoted to the baldest personality, consisting c comparison of a number of living authors, whose identity c be easily recognised by their initials, to Flying Fishes, Swall Ostriches, Parrots, Didappers, Porpoises, Frogs, Eels, Tortoises. This device answered its purpose perfectly. enraged authors rushed into print, and as Savage says in 'History,' "for half a year or more the common newspa were filled with the most abusive falsehoods and scurril they could possibly devise."

Pope, it appears, did not reveal even to Swift the real cau the delay in publishing the 'Dunciad.' At the end of Oct 1727, he had sent the Dean, who had recently returned to Ire after a second visit to Twickenham, four lines of the inscri to rouse his curiosity, and in January, 1727-8, he allowed hi see it in full. Swift was now most eager for the publication o poem, which was at this time called 'Dulness.' "Why," writes to Gay, on February 26, 1727-8, "does not Mr.] publish his 'Dulness'? The rogues he mawls will die in p and so will his friends, and so there will be neither punishi nor reward." Besides the necessity of publishing the 'Bat before the 'Dunciad,' a further reason for delaying the p cation of the latter may have been the success of the 'Beg Opera,' which had now been running for more than a m and was absorbing the conversation of the Town. On 10th of May, Pope having announced to Swift the chan the title of the poem, the latter once more presses fo

publication. "There is now a vacancy for fame," says he; "the 'Beggars' Opera' has done its task; *discedat uti conviva satur.*"

Still the 'Dunciad' failed to make its appearance. At the last moment the author changed his mind as to its form, and imparted the secret to Swift through Dr. Delany. He resolved to publish the poem anonymously, with nothing but initial letters to indicate the names of the persons ridiculed, and with a preface pretending that it was the work of a friend of Pope's; in order to keep up the mystification, he omitted the inscription to Swift as too clearly indicating the author; and he made believe on the title-page of the first edition that this was a reprint of another edition that had already been issued at Dublin.

These manœuvres were the product of his uncertainties and his fears. He was not sure how far the public would appreciate the satire; he was afraid that, if the authorship were avowed and names inserted, he might be exposed to an action for libel. On the former point he was soon relieved from anxiety. The poem appeared on the 28th of May, 1728, and was bought with avidity by the town, whose taste for personality had never before been gratified by such wholesale ridicule of individuals. This advantage being gained, Pope saw that he might disregard the fury of the Dunces, but, while resolving to advance openly to the attack, he tempered his boldness with the most nicely calculated caution. The imperfect edition which he had put out as a feeler showed him two things: first, that the public were extremely anxious to learn the real names of the dunces; and secondly, that the unmitigated personality of the satire required an apology. Accordingly he determined to publish the poem in a large edition, giving names and full explanatory notes, and inserting the suppressed inscription to Swift; but at the same time he wrote the Letter to the Publisher now prefixed to the 'Dunciad,' and procured for it the signature of his friend Cleland, afterwards called his "man William."

In order to lessen the danger of prosecution for libel, h prevailed on three peers with whom he was on the mos intimate terms, the good-natured Lord Bathurst, the easy going Earl of Oxford, and the magnificent Earl of Burlington to act as his nominal publishers; and it was through them that copies of the enlarged edition were at first distributed the booksellers not being allowed to sell any in their shops The King and Queen were each presented with a copy by the hands of Sir R. Walpole. In this manner, as the report quickly spread that the poem was the property of rich and powerfu noblemen, there was a natural disinclination on the part o the dunces to take legal proceedings, and the prestige of the 'Dunciad' being thus fairly established, the booksellers were allowed to proceed with the sale in regular course. When al danger appeared to be over, the three peers assigned the edition to Gilliver the publisher.

From these facts it is evident that the account which Pope through the instrumentality of Savage, gave in 1732 of the birth of the 'Dunciad,' and which is recited in Johnson's 'Life' as if it were trustworthy, is very remote from the truth. When the satire had established its reputation, the poet was anxious to have it believed that it was first published in March, 1729, with all the paraphernalia of notes, testimonies of authors, and names in full; that the authorship of the poem was from the beginning boldly avowed; and that its motive was a righteous determination to "drag into light the common enemies of mankind" who made their living by anonymous slander and scandal in the daily papers. He further endeavoured to strengthen his position by citing the example of Boileau, who had made war upon the bad writers of France. This parallel was misleading, for the satire of Boileau was directed against a set of men who, occupying a certain position in society, were exercising what, in his opinion, was a mischievous influence on the public taste; whereas the satire of Pope sprang from purely personal considerations. At a later period of his life he bound in four volumes the various

libels on himself which he had collected, and inscribed in the first volume the words:

"Behold, my desire is that mine adversary had written a book; surely I would take it upon my shoulder and bind it as a crown to me."

The collection shows that Pope had carefully read these criticisms, especially those of Dennis, which he frequently annotates in the margin. It comprises libels going back as far as Dennis's strictures on the 'Essay on Criticism' and Gildon's 'New Rehearsal,' and coming down to Dennis's 'Remarks on the Rape of the Lock' and Smedley's 'Gulliveriana and Alexandriana.' From these and other attacks Pope compiled the Testimonies of Authors, which he prefixed to the edition of the 'Dunciad' published in 1729, and which include purely literary strictures, such as those of Oldmixon and Welsted, on the 'Essay on Criticism;' defamatory remarks on his origin and rise to fame extracted from 'Mist's Journal'; reflections in the same journal on his character for honesty and gratitude, as shown in his conduct about the translation of the 'Odyssey,' and in the publication of the verses on Addison; besides, what he perhaps felt more keenly than all the rest, bitter allusions to his personal deformity. Against the opinions of these obscure writers he sets the praises of himself and his works, as sung by the most famous or noble authors of the age, Garth, Prior, Addison, and the Duke of Buckingham. It is observable that the libels to which he calls attention, so far from being the product of the 'Bathos,' date from his first appearance in literary life; and that nothing is cited from any author that does not reflect upon himself. From all this we may infer that the animating motive of the satire was not the fervent indignation of the moralist against a set of wretches, who were the common enemies of mankind, but resentment of personal injuries:

"Peace is my dear delight, not Fleury's more,
But touch me, and no minister so sore."

Indeed, Pope himself scarcely takes the trouble to veil his real motives. The professed action of the 'Dunciad' is "the restoration of the reign of Chaos and Night by the ministry of Dulness, in the removal of her imperial seat from the City to the Polite World." To support this great action by a fitting hero, "he seeks,"—so Martinus Scriblerus tells us,—"for one who hath been concerned in the journals, written bad plays or poems, and published low criticisms. He finds his name to be Tibbald, and he becomes of course the Hero of the Poem." An entire book of the 'Dunciad' is devoted to bringing into strong relief the various details exhibiting Theobald's pre-eminence in poverty and dulness. The man was certainly poor; he was certainly dull; but in neither respect had he done anything that could possibly support such an action as Pope imagines. He was not even so malignant as many of the other dunces who are represented as his subjects, for he had bestowed high praise on the translation of Homer, and had not been wanting in respect to Pope himself in his preface to 'Shakespeare Restored.' He was in fact utterly insignificant; and if he had not been unlucky enough to venture on a criticism of Pope's edition of Shakespeare, he might have remained in peaceful obscurity. "Probably," says Pope, "that proceeding elevated Tibbald to the dignity he holds in this poem, which he seems to deserve no other way better than his brethren." An exposure, that could not be answered, of the blunders in the edition of Shakespeare had seemed to place Theobald in a position of superiority to the first poet of the day; the indignity was not to be borne, and could only be avenged, Pope thought, by giving the critic a higher rank in the realm of dulness even than those who had attacked him with greater malevolence.

The exclusively personal character of the motives of the 'Dunciad' also shows itself in the introduction of some of the chief heroes in the Second Book, who were by no means representatives of Grub Street, but persons well-known in fashionable society. Prominent among these is the

'phantom,' Moore, offered as a prize in the first game to the competing booksellers; known when the first edition of the 'Dunciad' was published as James, or 'Jemmy,' Moore, but who, when the authoritative edition appeared, had changed his name to James Moore Smythe.[1] This person was the youngest son of Arthur Moore, who, as was commonly reported, had raised himself from a low station—being the son, according to Burnet, of a footman, and according to the 'Grub Street ballads,' of a jailor—to a position of considerable political importance in the reign of Queen Anne. In 1702 the father was elected one of the Managers of the United Trade to the East Indies; in 1705 he became one of the Controllers of Army Accounts; in 1707 he was chosen M.P. for East Grimsby; and he was the principal negociator of the Commercial Clauses in the Treaty of Utrecht. He was accused in 1714 of embezzling public money in connection with the Army Accounts; but it does not appear that, if guilty, he was punished for his misconduct; nor that, as Commissioner of Trade, he suffered in any way for his share in the commercial part of the Treaty of Utrecht, which aroused such vehement indignation among the Whigs. He is several times mentioned in the poems of Pope and Gay as a man apparently distinguished for 'gravity' of demeanour. He died in 1729. His wife's name was Theophila Smythe. She was the heiress of William Smythe, who died in 1720, leaving all his property in trust for his grandson, James Moore, on condition that he should take the name of Smythe. This condition was not fulfilled till 1729, when an Act was passed enabling James Moore and his issue to take the name of Smythe.

Arthur's "giddy son" was a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and, as one of the band of Gentlemen Pensioners, probably figured among the fashionable young men of the day.

[1] Mr. Carruthers wrongly supposes that Moore had changed his name when the 'Bathos' was published. Had it been so Pope would certainly have inserted the initials 'J. M. S.' instead of 'J. M.,' for in the 'Key to the Dunciad,' published immediately after the first edition of the poem, the change of name was duly announced. As to the date of the change see what follows in the text.

He was a familiar correspondent of Teresa and Martha Blount, writing to them under the name of Alexis, the sisters being called respectively Zephalinda and Parthenissa. Pope, if we may judge from the Epistle to Miss Blount on her leaving Town before the Coronation, must have been early acquainted with him; but it does not appear that Moore's intimacy with the ladies of Mapledurham had anything to do with the quarrel; which, as far as can be judged from the evidence, was entirely literary in its origin, and is certainly a remarkable illustration of the vanity and tortuousness of Pope's extraordinary character.

In the 'Miscellanies' the poet inserted fourteen "Verses Addressed to Mrs. M. B. (Martha Blount) on her Birthday," a duplicate of which he had also sent to Judith Cowper, a young lady who had professed the highest admiration of his genius, and with whom he corresponded. To these he added in the 'Miscellanies' the six lines now forming part of the Second Moral Essay, and beginning: "See how the world," &c.[1] At the same time he introduced into the 'Bathos' the initials "J. M." as an example of the frogs in poetry; "one that can neither walk nor fly, but can leap and bound to admiration; that lives generally at the bottom of a ditch, but makes a great noise whenever he thrusts his head above water." Thereupon a writer to the 'Daily Journal'—a paper which had made itself conspicuous for its attacks on Pope—signing himself 'Philalethes,' pointed out that the lines in the 'Miscellanies' were a plagiarism from James Moore's 'Rival Modes,' and asked if it was not monstrous that a man who could write six such lines should be satirised in this manner, and by the very man who had stolen them from him. When the annotated edition of the 'Dunciad' was published Pope made the letter of Philalethes—which he had probably written himself—the text for a statement in the 'Testimonies of Authors' explaining that he was himself the author of the lines; that James Moore had asked to be allowed to use them

[1] 'Moral Essay,' 243–248. In the Miscellanies the lines began, "Not as the world."

for his comedy, 'The Rival Modes'; that he had at first consented, but had on second thoughts written, before the play was acted, to say that the verses would be known to be his. Moore nevertheless retained them, and Pope apparently means it to be inferred that he claimed them for his own.

It would appear that Moore, a fashionable and dissipated young man, was at this time pressed for money, and wrote 'The Rival Modes' in the hope of obtaining enough to satisfy the demands of his creditors.[1] The play, which was a poor one, proved a failure, though the six notable lines were no doubt regarded as a redeeming feature, and Moore, if he did not actually claim to have written them, may have sought to gain some credit, in the midst of his discomfiture, by remaining silent as to their real authorship. It is easy to imagine how such a proceeding would have enraged a man of Pope's vain and irritable temper. Not being able with dignity to assert openly his property in the verses, he resorted to the crooked dealings which have just been described, and revenged himself on Moore by the ludicrous description of the Phantom Poet for whom the booksellers contend. The point of the dissolution of the Prize will be more fully understood from the circumstances related above:

> "And now the victor stretched his eager hand
> Where the tall Nothing stood, or seemed to stand;
> A shapeless shade, it melted from his sight,
> Like forms in clouds, or visions of the night.
> To seize his papers, Curl, was next thy care;
> His papers light fly diverse, tost in air;
> Songs, sonnets, epigrams, the winds uplift,
> And whisk 'em back to Evans, Young, and Swift.
> Th' embroidered suit at least he deemed his prey,
> That suit an unpaid tailor snatched away.
> No rag, no scrap, of all the beau or wit,
> That once so fluttered, and that once so writ."

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[1] Young writes to Tickell, February 21, 1726-7: "Mr. Moore's play is a bad one, yet met, through his indiscretion, a worse reception than as a first performance it deserved. His circumstances are very bad, and too great an eagerness to mend them by the profits of his play made him too pressing in the methods he took to do it effectually, and it disgusted the

Of the champions who are represented competing for this unsubstantial prize, one, Lintot, had recently offended the poet during the publication of the translation of the 'Odyssey.'[1] The other, Curll, a piratical and obscure bookseller, was an enemy of longer standing, having been first brought into collision with Pope, as has been already related, in 1716, when he published without sanction 'Court Poems,' and assigned the probable authorship, on the faith of rumour, to "the laudible Translator of Homer." Pope had on that occasion revenged himself by administering to Curll an emetic; he now had to complain of him for the publication of the correspondence between himself and Cromwell, which had been sold to Curll in 1726 by Mrs. Thomas, Cromwell's mistress.

The winner of the diving match in the first edition of the 'Dunciad' was Laurence Eusden, who had been made poet laureate in 1720. How he had offended Pope, except by being advanced to this honour, is not known; but his personal offence was in all likelihood not a serious one, as when the authoritative version of the 'Dunciad' was published in 1729 he was removed to make room for Jonathan Smedley, Dean of Clogher, an old antagonist of Swift, who had replied to the 'Miscellanies' in a volume of scurrilous abuse called 'Gulliveriana and Alexandriana.' The other performers in this game, the tickling match and the braying match, were old offenders. Dennis's attacks have been already mentioned: Oldmixon had written a ballad against the Popish poet; Blackmore had protested against the profanity of a parody of one of the psalms which had been ascribed, as it seems with some probability, to the pen of Pope; and Welsted had slandered his character in a poem called "Palæmon to Celia at Bath," published in 1717. The minor dunces, who are generally dealt with in single contemptuous touches in the third book, are for the most part rebels of a later date.

town. He got not £400 by it which by no means answers his expectation, so that he talks of going abroad through the necessity of his affairs."

[1] See letter of Fenton to Broome of January 9, 1723–4.

Amid the showers of arrows that he discharged at his literary foes, one or two were reserved for persons against whom he cherished a different kind of animosity. I have already spoken of the causes that produced an estrangement between Pope and Lady M. W. Montagu, when the latter with her husband came to reside at Twickenham. The first symptom of hostility appeared in a couplet of the 'Dunciad':

> "Whence hapless Monsieur much complains at Paris
> Of wrongs from Duchesses and Lady Maries."

To which was appended in 1729 the following note: "This passage was thought to allude to a famous lady who cheated a French wit of £5,000 in the South Sea year. But the author meant it in general of all bragging travellers, and of all w—— and cheats under the name of ladies." The 'hapless Monsieur' was one Rémond of Paris, who had made the acquaintance of Lady Mary on her way home from Constantinople, and pursued her with the usual attentions of gallantry. In 1720 he paid her a visit at Twickenham, when she advised him to sell out some South Sea Stock which he held. He did so, and left the money in her hands for investment. She reinvested the money in the South Sea, expecting that the stock would rise, instead of which it unfortunately fell more than half. When Lady Mary had reported this unhappy result to Rémond, he affected to believe that she had the money by her, and demanding £2,000 of her, threatened that, if it was not paid, he would print her letters. Lady Mary, in great distress, used all endeavours to dissuade him from his purpose, apparently with success, as no public account of the circumstances ever appeared. Pope, however, who was very likely consulted in the case,[1] knew enough of the circumstances to understand that they were damaging to Lady Mary, and inserted his venomous couplet in the 'Dunciad' as a first instalment

[1] Lady Mary may have reinvested the money in the South Sea in consequence of the advice contained in his letter of August 22, 1720.

of the punishment he conceived to be due to her for the deadly injury she had inflicted on his feelings.[1]

Another side stroke delivered in the 'Dunciad' was aimed at Aaron Hill. Pope had been assailed by this poetaster and projector in 1720. The latter had written a poem called 'The Northern Star' in praise of Peter the Great, and having through Lintot asked Pope's opinion, had been informed of some unintelligible criticism which had been made on it, and which the poet entirely disclaimed. In revenge he had published, in a new edition of his poem, a preface in which he made some bitter reflections on Pope's moral character. On learning that he had acted in unjustifiable haste, he made profuse apologies, and the matter seemed to have dropped. Not long afterwards, however, he made three several uncomplimentary references to the poet in his paper, called 'The Plain-Dealer.'[2] Whether in consequence of these uncalled-for attacks, or from his own irresistible spirit of satire, Pope inserted in Chapter VI. of the 'Bathos' the initials A. H. among the representatives of the Flying Fish, typifying "writers who now and then rise upon their fins, and fly out of the profound, but their wings are soon dry, and they drop down to the bottom." Hill put on the cap, and answered the satire by a copy of verses on Pope, and an epigram on Pope and Swift. When the 'Dunciad' appeared, it contained in the diving match the following lines:

> "H— tried the next, but hardly snatched from sight,
> Instant buoys up, and rises into light:
> He bears no token of the sable streams,
> And mounts far off among the swans of Thames."

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[1] Mr. W. Moy Thomas has shown very conclusively in his edition of Lady M. W. Montagu's Letters and Works that the inference Pope meant to be drawn from the Rémond incident was absolutely unfounded.—Vol. I., pp. 33–37.

[2] In the 'Plain-dealer' for September 25, 1724, where he contrasts the six guinea subscription for t[illegible] 'Odyssey' with the little patrona[illegible] given to Dennis's writings; in No. [illegible] where he announces Dennis's [illegible] proaching benefit, and blames Po[illegible] for joining in the parrot-cry agai[illegible] critics; and in No. 116, in which [illegible] has a reference to the edition Shakespeare "lately ushered i[illegible]

This was certainly much more of a compliment than a satire. In the edition of 1729, however, a note was appended to the passage:

"This is an instance of the tenderness of our author. The person here intended writ an angry preface against him, grounded on a mistake, which he afterwards honourably acknowledged in another printed preface. Since when he fell under a second mistake, and abused both him and his friend. He is a writer of genius and spirit, though in his youth he was guilty of some pieces bordering upon bombast. Our poet here gives him a panegyric instead of a satire, being edified beyond measure at this only instance he ever met with in his life, of one who was much a poet confessing himself in an error; and has suppressed his name, as thinking him capable of a second repentance."

Annoyed by this note, Hill retaliated in a poem called 'The Progress of Wit, a Caveat for the Use of an Eminent Writer,' in which he said that Pope, whom he calls "tuneful Alexis,"

> "Desiring and deserving others' praise,
> Poorly accepts a fame he ne'er repays:
> Unborn to cherish, sneakingly approves,
> And wants the soul to spread the worth he loves."

Pope was evidently much stung by this accusation, and when Hill, at the end of a complimentary letter, casually complained to him of the note in the 'Dunciad,' he replied with considerable tartness, asserting that A. H. in the 'Bathos' was not intended for Hill; that the verses in the 'Dunciad' were meant as a compliment; and that even the note (of which he denied the authorship)[1] contained quite as much commendation as reproof. Hill replied with manliness and spirit, and one portion of his letter must have convinced Pope that he had taken a just measure of his character:

"Your enemies," he writes, "have often told me that your spleen was at least as distinguishable as your genius; and it will be kinder I think to believe them, than impute to rudeness or ill-manners the

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the world by an extravagant subscription," and complains of the omission from it of Shakespeare's poems.

[1] Perhaps with *literal* truth. See his letter to Warburton of November 27, 1742.

return you were pleased to make for the civility with which I addressed you. I will therefore suppose you to have been peevish, or in pain, while you were writing me the letter, and upon that supposition shall endeavour to undeceive you. If I did not love you as a good man, while I esteem you as a good writer, I should read you without reflection: and it were doing too much honour to your friends, and too little to my own discernment, to go to them for a character of your mind, which I was able enough to extract from your writings. But to imitate your love of truth, with the frankness you have taught me, I wish the great qualities of your heart were as strong in you as the good ones: you would then have been above that emotion and bitterness, wherewith you remember things that want weight to deserve your anguish."[1]

He avowed the 'Caveat' as his own, declaring that he meant no harm by it, but only a mild reproof, and ended with some very sensible observations on Pope's affected depreciation of his own genius as compared with his moral character, since by the former, as Hill said, he would be remembered, while the latter he simply shared with every honest man.

The tone of Pope's reply shows that he felt himself worsted, though he still continued to excuse his conduct with regard to the 'Bathos,' and the note to the 'Dunciad,' the latter of which he offers to omit in a new edition. He reverts to the reflection on his character in the 'Caveat,' showing how much it had stung him:

"You cannot in your cool judgment think it fair to fix a man's character on a point, of which you do not give one instance? Name but the man or men, to whom I have unjustly omitted approbation or encouragement, and I will be ready to do them justice. I think I have publicly praised all the best writers of my time, except yourself, and such as I have had no fair opportunity to praise. As to the great and popular I have praised but few, and those at the times that they were least popular."[2]

On the whole Hill's accusation against Pope, made in a moment of vexation, is not justified. The poet was not given to "damn with faint praise," or to desert his friends when they were unpopular, and he was conscious of being maligned

[1] Letter from A. Hill to Pope of January 28, 1730–1.

[2] Letter from Pope to A. Hill of February 5, 1730–1.

in this respect. He could praise Cibber when he thought he deserved it; he was generous in his support of Savage; he exerted himself in behalf of Johnson, whose literary merit he early recognised; he wrote some of his finest lines in praise of Lord Oxford when he had fallen from power. What he could not do, and on this point Hill did not press him, was manfully to abide by his own actions, when brought face to face with their consequences. As Hill most justly pronounced, "the great qualities of his heart were not so strong as the good ones."

All his pettier feelings were gratified in a high degree by the success of the 'Dunciad.' The effect of the satire was indeed prodigious. The dunces were for the moment annihilated. Most of them, as Pope says, were half-starved hacks, dependent for a living upon the orders of the booksellers. When one of these writers saw his initials appear in the 'Dunciad,' and his name indicated in the Key, he knew very well that his doom had been pronounced, and that the booksellers would no longer employ him. An illustration, at once pitiful and ridiculous, of the abject terror into which the scribbling tribe were cast, remains in the letters addressed to Pope by Thomas Cooke of Braintree, the translator of Hesiod, who humbly apologises to the poet for the slighting allusions he had previously made to him in one of his poems, and proclaims his repentance.[1] But Pope might have remembered that a war between one man of genius and a hundred dunces could never be waged with advantage to the former. While his adversaries had nothing to lose in the way of reputation, his own, which was valuable to himself and the public, was a mark for every shaft of envy and resentment. Many of the dunces replied, and in such a manner as they knew well would produce anguish in the sensitive spirit of their enemy. Dennis, who had long been silent, now published 'Some Remarks on the Rape of the Lock,' which he said had been

[1] See Vol. X., pp. 212, 213.

written on the first appearance of that poem, and the publication of which had been postponed only in consequence of Pope's submissive attitude towards him. As usual he hits weak places, but spoils his case by his violence and blind injustice. The following is a specimen of his invective:

"And can such a creature as this be deserving of the noble name of a POET, the name and the function of which he has so much blasphemed? Nay, can he deserve even the name of a versifier whose ear is as injudicious and undistinguishing as the rest of his head? . . . A. P—E has none of these distinguishing talents, nor variety, nor force, nor power of numbers, but an eternal monotony His Pegasus is nothing but a battered Kentish jade, that neither ambles, nor paces, nor trots, nor runs, but is always upon the Canterbury; and as he never mends, never slackens his pace, but when he stumbles or falls. So that having neither judgment nor numbers, he is neither poet nor versifier, but only an eternal rhymer, a little conceited incorrigible creature, that, like the Frog in the fable, swells and is angry because he is not allowed to be as great as the ox."

Ralph produced a poem called 'Sawney,' a burlesque imitation of the style of 'Paradise Lost,' in which he retailed all the injurious reports respecting the translation of the 'Odyssey.' Concanen collected into a pamphlet called 'A Supplement to the Profound,' all the verses, essays, letters, and advertisements occasioned by the publication of the 'Miscellanies.' Lady M. W. Montagu (as Pope always firmly believed) joined in the general attack with a leaflet entitled 'A Pop upon Pope,' based on the fiction that the poet had been seized upon and whipped in Ham Walks by two gentlemen offended by the 'Dunciad.' Young came forward on the other side with two Epistles dedicated to Pope, whom he addressed in strains of the highest compliment, but, to neutralise the effect of these, Welsted and Moore Smythe published their 'One Epistle,' bringing together, in a completer form than in any of the libels that had hitherto appeared, all the charges most likely to prejudice him with the public. They pretended, among other things, that Pope had been "censured" by Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, and "blessed" by the traitor Atterbury; that he had flattered

the infamous Chartres; that Fenton had quarrelled with him and abjured his friendship; that he had behaved shabbily to "half-paid drudging Broome;" and that he had persuaded the Duke of Buckingham to dismiss Gildon from his employment. They even named the 'unfortunate lady' whose affections they declared that he had betrayed.

Pope might well ask as he did afterwards, in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,'

> "Whom have I hurt? Has poet yet or peer
> Lost the arched eyebrow or Parnassian sneer?"

He saw very well that he must resort to weapons different from those which he had hitherto employed. The 'One Epistle' was published in April, 1730, and before that date Pope had, under the management of his friends Dr. John Martyn and Dr. Richard Russell, started the 'Grub Street Journal,' reviving an old design, 'The Works of the Unlearned,' formed in the days of the Scriblerus Club, and ridiculing the dunces from behind an anonymous shield. The journal was a weekly one; the first number was published on the 8th of January, 1730; and it was carried on to the close of the year 1737. In it the Knights of the Bathos, a kind of Round Table of Critics, passed judgment on the literature of the day, and while they ironically depreciated Pope and his friends, heaped their praises upon the works of the dunces. Occasionally, however, they thought it expedient to be serious, and when the 'One Epistle' appeared, a writer in the 'Journal,' evidently Pope himself, examined the different charges in detail and gave to each of them a flat denial. It is evident that Welsted's and Smythe's satire, poor in design as it was, wounded Pope to the quick, and that it was the secret of the intense personal bitterness with which he ever afterwards pursued James Moore Smythe, whom in the 'Dunciad' he had handled with a kind of rollicking contempt. Smythe was fairly cowed, and neither he nor Welsted appear to have attempted any retaliation against the storm of

epigrams with which the 'Grub Street Journal' incessantly assailed them.

Fresh editions of the 'Dunciad' were issued at short intervals down to the time of Pope's death, and there was scarcely one which did not contain some alterations and additions. He thus continued to illustrate the remark that in the first edition he puts into the mouth of his 'Publisher':

"Whoever will consider the unity of the whole design will be sensible that the poem was not made for these authors, but these authors for the poem. And I should judge that they were clapped in as they rose, fresh and fresh, and changed from day to day, in like manner as, when the old boughs wither, we thrust new ones into the chimney."

The satire is therefore wholly devoid of the moral significance which the poet claims for it. It represents merely a quarrel between authors; literary genius being engaged on the one side, literary envy on the other, and unscrupulous bitterness and malignity on both. The wonder is that such a medley of personal detail should still be able to excite the interest of the reader. We are not greatly moved at the treatment of the scribbling victims of Juvenal and Boileau, the Codruses and Cotins of literature. But the 'Dunciad' occupies a position by itself. Its name at least is known in every European country; and in England even to-day the imagination is entertained with the fortunes of these obscure heroes of the mock epic, who have most of them been dead for more than a century and a half. It is impossible not to feel a mixture of amusement and compassion in observing the evident enjoyment with which Pope seizes on his hosts of enemies, and rolls them one after the other in the mud; impossible not to admire the artful and almost sublime imagery by which he brings into relief their miserable meanness. The 'Dunciad' in fact, with all the pettiness of its particulars, is still a living monument of Pope's own character. It possesses a yet larger interest. The war it celebrates is something quite different in its character from the mere per-

sonal jealousies of rival writers like Harvey and Nash, Dryden and Shadwell. In the person of Pope we see an image of Literature, asserting itself as an independent force in the State, in the face of all the obstacles presented by rank, station, and privilege; in his grotesque exaggeration of the real proportions of his subject there is a lively image of the weaknesses so often found in the purely literary character, its vanity, its sensitive irritability, and its self-love; Grub Street reflects the rancorous envy which is certain to attend all literary success. In these respects the satire will always possess an interest far transcending its actual theme, and will point a moral, though of a kind very different from that which Pope sought to enforce.

CHAPTER XI.

THE 'ESSAY ON MAN' AND THE 'MORAL ESSAYS.'

Bolingbroke's influence on Pope—Epistle to Burlington on 'Taste'—Character of Timon—Epistle to Bathurst on 'The Use of Riches'—Reason for the Anonymous Publication of the 'Essay on Man'—Merits and Defects of the Essay.

It is highly characteristic of Pope, that while he was pursuing the objects of his vengeance with deadly animosity, he was meditating what he flattered himself was "a temperate yet not inconsistent, and a short yet not imperfect system of ethics."[1]

The 'Essay on Man' occupies a position among Pope's works analogous to that of the 'Essay on Criticism.' As the latter was the product of general forces operating throughout Europe in the sphere of taste and imagination, so the 'Essay on Man' reflects the influences which since the Reformation had determined in England the direction of religious thought. As to the origin of the particular form in which Pope has embodied the ideas of his time, opinion has been much divided. Some have ascribed it entirely to the individual influence of Bolingbroke. Lord Bathurst declared that he had read the whole scheme of the poem drawn up in a series of propositions by Bolingbroke, which Pope was to enlarge, illustrate, and turn into verse. Mr. Pattison, on the other hand, believed that the subject of the poem was imposed on Pope from without by the general tendency of national thought, and that as he entered on his task without sympathy and understanding, the result, philosophically speaking, was a medley of confused

[1] 'The Design of the Essay on Man.'

theories. The truth seems to lie midway between these two opinions. Bolingbroke undoubtedly contributed a large part of the matter of the poem: as much more was derived from various other writers of the period, who had speculated in the same direction: but when all Pope's philosophical obligations are admitted, the fact remains that the 'Essay on Man' is a poem, and a poem of a highly original and characteristic kind; and, this being so, it is plain that, in all essential points, the creation must have proceeded from the poet's own mind. The history of the growth of the conception and execution of this work, and of the 'Moral Essays' which are so closely related to it, may be easily gathered from Pope's correspondence with Bolingbroke, Richardson, and Caryll.

Bolingbroke's acquaintance with Pope before his exile was apparently slight. The latter was in all probability introduced to him by Swift after the publication of 'Windsor Forest,' and they met as fellow members of the Scriblerus Club. But Bolingbroke's thoughts were at that period too much absorbed in party politics to allow him to bestow much of his time upon one who had still to establish his reputation as a poet. While he resided in France no letters passed between him and Pope. In 1723, however, through the mediation of the Duchess of Kendal, he was allowed to return to his native country. In the autumn of that year he came over to England to make preparations for his permanent residence there, and he naturally took the opportunity of renewing his acquaintance with Pope, now beyond question the most celebrated man of letters of the day. Some months after his return to France he wrote to the poet exhorting him not to be content with translation, but "to write what will deserve to be translated three thousand years hence into languages as yet perhaps unformed." Pope had heard of Bolingbroke's researches into philosophy during his exile, and had asked him some questions on the subject. The other replied:

"After saying so much to you about yourself, I must say a word or two in answer to a paragraph of your letter which concerns me. First,

then, I would assure you, that I profess no system of philosophy whatever, for I know none which has not been pushed beyond the bounds of nature and truth. Secondly, far from despising the world, I admire the work, and I adore the author,—*ille opifex rerum*, you Greeks call him δημιουργός. At physical evils I confess that I tremble, but as long as I possess the use of my reason I shall not murmur. Moral evils, the effect of that *mala ratio*, as Cotta methinks with great impropriety calls error, we may avoid, or we may bear. That stock of them to which I was predestinated, is I hope pretty nearly spent, and I am willing to think that I have neither borne them unworthily nor neglected to draw some advantage from them. Give me leave in the third and last place to assure you that I have studied neither the Fathers nor the Councils. I began late to read, and later to think. It behoved me therefore to husband my time." [1]

Bolingbroke had in fact never attempted serious study ti[l] he was past forty. During his enforced leisure at La Sourc[e] however, he read much both of history and philosophy, an[d] the effects are seen in his letters to Pope and to others, whic[h] are written in a tone of philosophic indifference scantily di[s]guising the feelings of disappointed ambition. Pope's reply t[o] the above letter is no less characteristic. He had made hi[s] position in life easy by his translation of the 'Iliad;' an[d] though he was contemplating an addition to his fortune b[y] the translation of the 'Odyssey,' the sense of his indepen[d]dence was so strong upon him, that in answer to Bolingbroke' exhortations to original composition, his rhetorical instinc[t] makes him cry out, almost in the words of the 'Epistle t[o] Arbuthnot,' "Heavens! was I born for nothing but t[o] write?"

"I am already arrived to an age which more awakens my diligenc[e] to live satisfactorily, than to write unsatisfactorily to myself; more t[o] consult my happiness than my fame; or, in default of happiness, m[y] quiet." [2]

Yet, while he appears to have a mind thus vacant fo[r] philosophy, the spirit of the 'Dunciad' moves him to say:

[1] Letter of Bolingbroke to Pope of February 18, 1724.

[2] Letter of Pope to Bolingbroke of April 9, 1724.

"Neither do I think the examples of the best writers in our time and nation would have the prevalence over the bad ones, which your lordship observes them to have had in the Roman times. A state constantly divided into various factions and interests, occasions an eternal swarm of bad writers. Some of these will be encouraged by the government equally if not superiorly to the good ones, because the latter will rarely, if ever, dip their pens for such ends. And these are sure to be cried up and followed by one-half of the kingdom, and consequently possessed of no small degree of reputation. Our English style is more corrupted by the party writers, than by any other cause whatever. They are read, and will be read, and approved in proportion to their degree of merit, much more than any other set of authors in any science, as men's passions and interests are stronger and surer than their tastes and judgments."[1]

A little before this correspondence Bolingbroke and Pope had sent a joint letter to Swift, in which they discoursed with self-complacency on their philosophic content. The Dean saw through their professions:

"I have no very strong faith," he wrote in reply, "in your pretenders to retirement. You are not of an age for it, nor have gone through either good or bad fortune enough to go into a corner, and form conclusions *de contemptu mundi et fugâ sæculi*,—unless a poet grows weary of too much applause, as ministers do of too much weight of business."[2]

In 1725 Walpole brought in a Bill restoring Bolingbroke's estates, but the part of the act of attainder imposing on him political disabilities still remained in force. He now settled at Dawley, his country seat, where, while meditating factious intrigues, he affected to have buried himself as in "an agreeable sepulchre." Still playing the part of the retired philosopher, he hunted, made hay, and grew, as Pope says, 'a great divine.' He was surrounded with an illustrious and admiring circle, to whom he delivered himself as an oracle. "He possessed," says Lord Chesterfield, "such a flowing happiness of expression that even his most familiar conversations, if taken down in writing, would have borne the press without the least correction either as to method or

[1] Letter of Pope to Bolingbroke of April 9, 1724.

[2] Letter from Swift to Pope of September 20, 1723.

style." Of all his audience at these monologues none was so fascinated, so enthusiastic as Pope. He listened to the eloquence of his friend as if it were divinely inspired. "Lord Bolingbroke," he wrote to Swift on October 16, 1725, "is the most improved mind since you saw him, that ever was improved without shifting into a new body, or being; *paullo minus ab angelis.*" Dawley was within easy driving distance of Twickenham, and thither Pope went frequently to listen to the entrancing discourses of the newly discovered philosopher. On one of these occasions he met with an accident that almost proved fatal to him. In September, 1726, as he was being driven back from Dawley to Twickenham in Bolingbroke's coach, on coming to a little river, over which the bridge had been broken the coachman drove down the bank to cross the water. The bank being steep, with a hole on one side and a block of timber on the other, the coach was upset into the river, and as the glasses were up, the poet would have been drowned, if one of the footmen had not broken the window and pulled him out. His right hand was severely cut, and he was for some time in danger of losing the use of his fingers. Among the letters of congratulation which he received after his escape was one full of compliments and condolence from Voltaire who was at the time in England as the guest of Bolingbroke.

As we see from Bolingbroke's first letter to Pope previously cited, the Moral Government of the World was a favourite subject of speculation with the former. He doubtless expatiated upon it during Pope's visits to Dawley, and his eloquence took such possession of the poet's imagination that he formed a project of treating the subject in a composition in which the poetical element would have been completely overwhelmed by the didactic. The scheme, which he communicated to Spence in 1730, was as follows:—

"The first epistle is to be to the whole work, what a scale is to a book of maps; and in this, I reckon, lies my greatest difficulty; not only in settling and ranging the parts of it aright, but in making them agreeable enough to be read with pleasure."

Spence adds:

"This was said in May, 1730, of what he then used to call his 'Moral Epistles,' and what he afterwards called his 'Essay on Man.' He at that time intended to have included in one Epistle what he afterwards addressed to Lord Bolingbroke in four." [1]

On another occasion Pope said to Spence:

"I had once thoughts of completing my ethic work in four books. The first, you know, is on the Nature of Man. The second would have been on Knowledge and its limits; here would have come in an Essay on Education, part of which I have inserted in the 'Dunciad.' The third was to have treated of Government, both ecclesiastical and civil. The fourth would have been on Morality, in eight or nine of the most concerning branches of it: four of which would have been the two extremes to each of the Cardinal Virtues." [2]

Fortunately for him, irresolution, or right instinct, prevented him from attempting to execute a design which could only have ended in a monument of oppressive dulness. Bolingbroke's good taste also served to turn his genius into the right path.

"Should the poet," he says, "make syllogisms in verse, or pursue a long process of reasoning in the didactic style, he would be sure to tire his reader on the whole, though he reasoned better than the Roman, and put into some parts of his verse the same poetical fire. He must contract, he may shadow, he has a right to omit whatever will not be cast in the poetic mould, and when he cannot instruct he may hope to please. In short it seems to me, that the business of the philosopher is to dilate, to press, to prove, to convince, and that of the poet to hint, to touch his subject with short and spirited strokes, to warm the affections and to speak to the heart." [3]

To this admirable criticism he gave a practical application by urging the poet, in the first place, to the composition of what are now known as the 'Moral Essays.'

"He [Pope]," he writes to Swift, November 19, 1729, "will say as much to you in one page, as I have said in three. Bid him talk to you of the work he is about, I hope in good earnest. It is a fine one and will be in his hands an original. His sole complaint is that he finds it too easy in the execution. This flatters his laziness. It

[1] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 16.
[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 315.
[3] Works, vol. iii., p. 44.

flatters my judgment, who always thought, that universal as his talents are, this is eminently and peculiarly his, above all the writers I know, living or dead; I do not except Horace."

The poem on which Pope was engaged at the date of this letter was, no doubt, what is now known as the 'Fourth Moral Essay,' which was originally published as an Epistle 'On Taste,' and afterwards 'On False Taste.' It was addressed to the Earl of Burlington on the occasion of "his publishing Palladio's Designs of the Baths, Arches, Theatres, &c., of Ancient Rome;" and was an Essay on the text—

> "Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
> And, though no science, fairly worth the seven."

Founded as it was on the speculative principles he had adopted from Bolingbroke, Pope imagined that the public would give him credit for the moral motives by which it was inspired. But he was soon to learn that if a poet wishes to gain reputation as a dispassionate philosopher, it is not to his advantage to bear the character of a personal satirist.

The poem was published on December 31, 1731, with the author's name. Abstract as the subject was, the Epistle contained a number of portraits, imaginary indeed, but brilliantly executed, after the manner of La Bruyère's Characters and the ideal personages of the 'Spectator.' Some of these, like the characters of Villario and Sabinus, were so obviously general as to defy identification; but the portrait of Timon, painted with greater minuteness and extension, contained certain details which seemed to point unmistakably to Canons, a house belonging to John Brydges, Duke of Chandos. Chandos was a man of splendid liberality and popular manners; still, had the satire been the work of another hand, it is probable that, as he was not mentioned by name, the allusions to his taste would not have excited displeasure. From the author of the 'Dunciad,' however, it was natural to look for personality, and a hundred dunces at once loudly proclaimed that Timon himself was

meant as a portrait of Chandos, and that the attack was the more inexcusable, because Pope had received from the Duke the present of £500.

This portion of the slander Pope instantly and unhesitatingly denied, and his denial was no doubt true. It would have been well if he had been equally straightforward, as he easily might, in his method of disavowing the satirical intentions imputed to him by his enemies. Unfortunately he had an incurable taste for crooked practices, and the course he actually took was the most damaging to his own interest it was possible to choose. He prevailed on his accommodating friend Cleland to publish a letter addressed to Gay—obviously written by himself—in which he sought to prove that it was impossible that the character of Timon *could* have been meant for a satire on Chandos. He observed with justice: "I had no great cause to wonder that a character belonging to twenty should be applied to one; since by that means nineteen should escape the ridicule." He further called attention to the fact that the satire was not personal, "because all its reflections are on things not on persons; not on the man, but on his house and gardens, pictures, trimmed trees, and violins." The portrait, as a whole, was an ideal one made up of a number of particular observations; but since Pope could not bring himself to say this directly, the public, which had at once perceived the likeness to Canons, thought that he was unable to deny that Timon was meant for a malicious satire on Chandos. The report spread by the Dunces continued to be so widely believed, that two years afterwards Lady M. W. Montagu was able to avail herself of the scandal in the 'Verses to the Imitator of Horace.'

"But if thou seest a great and generous heart
Thy bow is doubly bent to force a dart.
* * * * *
Nor only justice vainly we demand,
But even Benefits can't rein thy hand:
To this or that alike in vain we trust,
Nor find thee less ungrateful than unjust."

Pope was much disturbed by these accusations. He wrote to the Duke of Chandos a letter protesting his innocence, to which the latter returned a dignified but somewhat reserved reply. When a fresh edition of the 'Epistle' was required, he prefixed to it a letter addressed to Lord Burlington, in which he said:—

"I have learnt that there are some who would rather be wicked than ridiculous; and therefore it may be safer to attack vices than follies. I will therefore leave my betters in the quiet possession of their idols, their groves, and their high places, and change my subject from their pride to their meanness, from their vanities to their miseries; and as the only certain way to avoid misconstruction, to lessen offence, and not to multiply ill-natured applications, I may probably in my next make use of real names instead of feigned ones."

The only effect of this letter was to put a new weapon into the hands of the ingenious dunces. On the 22nd January 1732, Pope writes to Lord Oxford:

"I have been much blamed by the formalists of the town for subscribing my letter in print to Lord Burlington with 'your faithful, affectionate servant.' The noise which malice has raised about that epistle has caused me to suppress a much better concerning the Use of Riches, in which I had paid some respect and done some justice to the Duke of Chandos. But to print it now would be interpreted by malice (and I find it is malice I am to expect from the world, not thanks, for my writings) as if I had done it in atonement, or through some apprehension or sensibility of having meant that Duke an abuse, which I am sure was far from my thought."

It appears, therefore, that the 'Epistle to Bathurst' was written full twelve months before it was published. It was not issued till January, 1733, and then only with many misgivings on the part of the poet. From a letter to Richardson dated November 2, 1732, it seems that he was then just about to print the Epistle anonymously. But on December 14, 1732, he writes to Caryll:

"I hoped every week to have sent you a poem of mine, which has been in the press a month, but most unexpected accidents have still retarded it. . . . I expect, whenever it does come out much noise and calumny will attend it, as these things generally attend all that is honest or public-spirited."

The reception of the poem, however, relieved him from his apprehensions, for in a subsequent letter to Caryll (January 31, 1733) we read:

"I find the last I made has had some good effect, and yet the preacher less railed at than those usually are who will be declaiming against popular or national vices. I shall redouble my blows very speedily."

In these last words there appears to be an allusion to the Moral Essay on 'The Characters of Men,' published on February 5, 1733, and to that on 'The Characters of Women,' which, as we see from Pope's letter to Swift of February 16, 1733, was completed by the latter date.

The difference of the public judgments passed respectively on the Epistles to Burlington and Bathurst may be readily explained. The Epistle on 'Riches' was founded, like that on 'False Taste,' on the general principles soon to be expounded in the 'Essay on Man,' and Pope, as he had threatened, had used in it real names instead of feigned ones. But these names were not often heard in public or were heard only to be execrated. The class of persons to which Blunt, Turner, Hopkins, and Ward belonged had been held in special abhorrence since the days of the South Sea Bubble, and more recently the glaring frauds of the Charitable Corporation, of the Trustees for the Sale of Forfeited Estates, and of the York Buildings Company, had made the name of Director almost as abominable as that of a card-sharper or a thief. In attacking the class Pope had therefore the feeling of the public entirely on his side. Party spirit, too, entered into the estimate of the poem. Walpole relied greatly on the support of the monied interest: his own methods of Parliamentary corruption made him look on the scandals of the commercial world with an indulgence that was blamed even by his own friends. Hence the Opposition were no doubt forward in declaring that, in taking up his parable against Avarice, the poet was satirising the vices of the minister and the venality of his supporters.

In spite, however, of the favourable reception given to the 'Epistle on Riches,' the poet showed extraordinary caution in

the publication of the 'Essay on Man,' which took plac the following month. Johnson has explained generally motives of Pope in issuing this poem without his name neither he, nor any of the poet's biographers have perceived intimately these were connected with the public outcry ag the character of Timon. According to Warburton the d of the 'Essay' was formed as early as 1725, and it is ce Pope spoke openly to Spence on the subject in May, 1 Later in the same year Bolingbroke writes to Bathurst he and Pope "are at present deep in metaphysics." In Au 1731, the same writer tells Swift that three of the Epistl which the first portion of the 'Essay' was to consist were pleted, and that the fourth was in hand. Yet the first E was not published till eighteen months later, and after appearance of the 'Epistle to Burlington' in December, 1 not a word is breathed by the poet, even to such inti correspondents as Swift and Caryll, of his intentions regard to the 'Essay.' On the other hand to Jona Richardson, who had seen the 'Essay' in MS. before special reasons for secrecy existed, he writes in Febr 1732–3, that is to say, on the eve of publication:

"The thing I apprehend is of another nature—viz., a copy of p another work, which I have cause to fear may be got out underhand of how much, or what part I know not. In that case pray conceal en your having any knowledge of its belonging, either wholly or part me; it would prejudice me both in reputation and profit."

After the publication he remarks to the same correspon as if the latter were ignorant of the authorship: "I h hundred things to talk to you of; and among the re the 'Essay on Man' which I hear so much of. Pray is your opinion of it?"[1]

Not only was the poem published anonymously with month of the appearance of the 'Epistle to Bathurst,' w bore his name, but a bad rhyme, "lane" with "name," introduced obviously for the purpose of diverting suspi

[1] Letter to Richardson, No. 18, Vol. IX., p. 502.

Pope was, it is plain, most anxious to discover what was the opinion of religiously-minded readers on the poem upon its own merits. Thus he writes to Caryll on March 8, 1732-3, just after the publication:

"The town is now very full of a new poem entitled 'An Essay on Man,' attributed, I think with reason, to a divine. It has merit in my opinion, but not so much as they give it. At least it is incorrect, and has some inaccuracies in the expressions,—one or two of an unhappy kind, for they may cause the author's sense to be turned, contrary to what I think his intention, a little unorthodoxically. Nothing is so plain as that he quits his proper subject, this present world, to assert his belief of a future state, and yet there is an *if* instead of a *since* that would overthrow his meaning; and at the end he uses the words 'God the soul of the world,' which at the first glance may be taken for heathenism, while his whole paragraph proves him quite Christian in his system, from Man up to Seraphim. I want to know your opinion of it after twice or thrice reading."

Caryll's opinion as to the orthodoxy of the poem seems to have been not quite consolatory to the poet, who writes to his friend again on October 23, 1733:

"I believe the author of the 'Essay on Man' will end his poem in such a manner as to satisfy your scruple. I think it impossible for him, with any congruity to his confined and strictly philosophical subject, to mention our Saviour directly; but he may magnify the Christian doctrine as the perfection of all moral; nay, and even, I fancy, quote the very words of the Gospel precept, that includes all the law and the precepts, *Thou shalt love God above all things*, &c., and I conclude that will remove all possible occasion of scandal."

On January 1, 1734, he returns to the subject:

"To the best of my judgment the author shows himself a Christian at last in the assertion that all earthly happiness, as well as future felicity, depends upon the doctrine of the Gospel,—love of God and man,—and that the whole aim of our being is to attain happiness here and hereafter by the practice of universal charity to man, and entire resignation to God. More particular than this he could not be with any regard to the subject, or manner in which he treated it."

It is clear from these expressions that what Pope most dreaded was that the poem might lay its author open to the charge of Deism; and that, if he should be himself known as the writer, his numerous enemies, who had already shown their ingenuity in the application given to the character of Timon,

would seize the opportunity to damage his reputation by classing him with such unpopular persons as Toland, Tindal, Collins, and Woolston. He was completely unaware that the reasoning of the poem exposed him to the far more formidable accusation brought against him by Crousaz of undermining morality by practically denying the moral attributes of God.

The modern reader of the 'Essay on Man' finds a difficulty in understanding the manner in which it impressed contemporary imagination. He is astonished that such a farrago of fallacies should ever have been accepted as a work of philosophy. He is still more surprised that the fatalistic tendency of the poem should not have been at once apparent. His wonder reaches a climax in finding that it was at first attributed to a divine. All these seeming anomalies, however, become easily intelligible when once we comprehend the conditions of thought in the early part of the eighteenth century.

Speculation was then in the air. "The 'Essay on Man,'" says Mr. Pattison, in an acute and exhaustive criticism of the poem, "was composed at a time when the reading public of this country, were occupied with an intense and eager curiosity by speculation on the first principles of Natural Religion. Everywhere, in the pulpit, in the coffee-houses, in every pamphlet, argument on the origin of evil, on the goodness of God, and the constitution of the world was rife."[1] Among the controversialists the foremost were the clergy of the Church of England. Occupying, as they did, a position always liable to be assailed by the Church of Rome and the Champions of Free Thought, they may be said to have slept in their armour, and could as the occasion called produce from their arsenal weapons available against either enemy. Throughout the sixteenth and a considerable part of the seventeenth century, when it was their main object to defend the Church of England against the usurpation and corruption of the Church of Rome, they sought for their arguments in the Scripture

[1] Pope: 'Essay on Man' (Clarendon Press Series), p. 4.

the Fathers. But in the seventeenth century the forces of Revolution prevailed, and the Clergy found themselves required to apologise for the very existence of Revealed Religion and an established priesthood. To meet the Deists, their new antagonists, they were obliged to shift their ground to the principles of Reason and Nature. Some, like Samuel Clarke, who was accused by his opponents within the Church of semi-Arianism, rested their defence of Christianity on *à priori* reasoning. Others, like Woolaston, anticipating the more famous argument of Butler, proved that Revelation was only the necessary complement of Natural Religion. A few there were also, such as Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor and afterwards successively of Salisbury and Winchester, the extreme latitudinarianism of whose doctrines was barely distinguishable from the principles of the Deists. It was, therefore, no matter of surprise at this period, that a divine should publish a system of Natural Religion; nor, with the various shades of opinion prevailing in the Church of England, would there have appeared to be anything singular if the doctrines of such an exposition hovered on the verge of heterodoxy.

To the question, How the 'Essay on Man' could ever have been accepted as embodying a philosophical system; the answer is, that it was partly because it suited the theological requirements of the age, but more because its poetical qualities blinded men's judgments to its philosophical defects. Mr. Pattison says: "It is not enough that a given subject should be in itself adapted for poetry; the poet who undertakes it should be in sympathy with his theme. Pope, as the popular writer of his day, suffered a subject to be imposed upon him, because it interested others, not himself."[1] But this, I think, goes much too far. Had the subject been really forced on Pope from without, it could not have been conceived by him with the ardour necessary to impress the public imagination, and the poem would never have established itself as a classic.

[1] 'Essay on Man' (Clarendon Press Series), p. 6.

Mr. Pattison seeks to prove "the indifference of Pope to his professed argument," by contrasting his confusions of thought with the consistent logic of writers like Hooker, Hobbes, and Locke.[1] But this only proves Pope to have been inferior to these philosophers in reasoning power: it does not convict him of want of sympathy with his subject. It appears to me, on the contrary, that the constitution of his mind gave promise from his early years of some such work as the 'Essay on Man' in his maturity; while his correspondence, and the evidence of the poem itself, show the latter to have been not simply the mechanical versification of a phase of passing thought but the genuine product of his own nature.

Brought up entirely by Roman Catholic priests, Pope showed early in his correspondence that the rigid forms of devotion practised by his parents were distasteful to him. He appears in his fourteenth year to have interested himself in the controversy between the Roman and Anglican Churches, but as he tells Atterbury, the arguments only led him to find himself a Papist or Protestant by turns, according to the last book he read. It does not indeed follow that, because he failed to be persuaded definitely by the arguments of either Church, that he rejected the belief that was common to both; but the effect of such a course of training must have been to unsettle all fixed principles in his mind; and the discursive reading in which he indulged no doubt left his convictions still more vague. He retained the forms of the Catholic faith, but he contrived to reconcile with them in his own mind principles indistinguishable from Deism. "After all," he writes to Atterbury, when the latter attempted to convert him, "I verily believe your Lordship and I are both of the same religion, if we were thoroughly understood by one another, and that all honest and reasonable Christians would be so, if they did but talk together every day; and had nothing to do together, but to serve God, and live in peace with their neighbours."[2]

[1] 'Essay on Man' (Clarendon Press Series), p. 12.

[2] Letter from Pope to Atterbury of November 20, 1717.

This temper of mind was encouraged by his exclusively literary occupations. Disqualified from engaging actively with either party in religion or politics, he not unnaturally came to look upon himself as superior to both. In the 'Essay on Criticism' he had introduced one or two strokes reflecting on the intolerance of religious factions, and some of his fellow Catholics had complained of them to Caryll. Pope replying to the latter, says: "The very simile itself—

> 'Thus wit, like faith, by each man is applied
> To one small sect, and all are damned beside,'

if read twice, may convince them that the censure of damning here lies not on our Church, unless they will call our Church one small sect. And the cautious words, *by each man*, manifestly show it a general reflection on all such, whoever they are, who entertain such narrow and limited notions of the mercy of the Almighty, which the reformed ministers of the Presbyterians are as guilty of as any people living."[1] Like most men of the literary class he had an instinct of conservatism and a hatred of excess. The moderation of Erasmus, the typical man of letters, was the great object of his admiration. In the 'Essay on Criticism' he calls him

> "That great injured name,
> The glory of the priesthood and the shame,"

and he wrote to Caryll with reference to the allusion:

"I will set before me that excellent example of that great man and great saint, Erasmus, who in the midst of calumny proceeded with all the calmness of innocence, and the unswerving spirit of primitive Christianity. However, I would advise them to suffer the mention of him to go unregarded, lest I should be forced to do that for his reputation which I would never do for my own—I mean to vindicate so great a light of our Church from the malice of past times and the ignorance of the present, in a language which may extend farther than that in which the trifle about criticism is written."[2]

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[1] Letter to Caryll of June 18, 1711.

[2] Ibid.

He repeats the same praises in his 'First Imitation Horace,' where he speaks of himself as

> "Papist or Protestant, or both between,
> Like good Erasmus in an honest mean;
> In moderation placing all my glory,
> While Tories call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory."

He sums up what he considers to be his whole character i the conclusion of the letter to Atterbury before cited:

"I am a Catholic in the strictest sense of the word. If I was bo under an absolute prince, I would be a quiet subject; but I tha God I was not. I have a due sense of the excellence of the Briti Constitution. In a word, the things I have always wished to see a not a Roman Catholic, or a French Catholic, or a Spanish Catholi but a true Catholic; not a King of Whigs, or a King of Tories, but King of England, which God of his mercy grant his present Majes may be, and all future Majesties." [1]

With a mind full of this vague benevolence; with an i dependence secured to him for his life; relieved of t mechanical strain of translation; at leisure to conten plate the world; Pope, in 1726, was in a mood that pr disposed him to be enchanted with Bolingbroke's ready-ma system of philosophy. Neither the poet nor his friend h any desire to provoke a collision with the representatives authority. Bolingbroke, indeed, hated Christianity, not ho ever with the zeal of a religious fanatic who desired overturn what was established, but of a neophyte in philosoph who found his intellectual system at variance with the doctrin of Revelation. Pope, on the other hand, conceived the desi of the 'Essay on Man' with an imagination delighted wi the idea that he was now in possession of a scheme of thoug easily to be reconciled with his own diluted conception Christianity. He entered with enthusiasm upon the exec tion of his design. The framework of the 'Essay' he ow to his 'guide, philosopher, and friend.' If we did not kn this from what he told Spence [2] it might readily be inferr

[1] Letter to Atterbury of November 20, 1717.

[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 144.

from the internal evidence of the poem itself. The peroration, which, as is usual with Pope, is extremely precise in its language, shows that in every one of the Four Epistles, the threads of the argument, to use Johnson's expression, are Bolingbroke's.

> "Oh! while along the stream of time thy name
> Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;
> Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
> Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
> When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
> Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
> Shall then this verse to future age pretend,
> Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?
> That, *urged by thee*, I turned the tuneful art
> From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;
> For wit's false mirror held up nature's light;
> Showed erring pride whatever is, is right;
> That reason, passion answer one great aim;
> That true self-love and social are the same;
> That virtue only makes our bliss below,
> And all our knowledge is ourselves to know."

Of the last five lines of this passage, each of the first four condenses the main argument in the successive epistles of the 'Essay,' which Pope thus proclaims to have been written at Bolingbroke's instigation; and that the particular arguments were inspired by the latter is unmistakably shown by passages in the 'Fragments' exactly corresponding in sense with passages in the 'Essay.'[1] The last line expresses the sum of Bolingbroke's philosophy of Agnosticism.

But having entered on the possession of his subject, Pope treated it as a poet rather than as a philosopher, differing in this respect from Lucretius, who, in his 'De Rerum Naturâ,' relegates poetry to the second place. Lucretius heats his imagination in the ardour of his advocacy of what he believes to be philosophic truth; Pope only cares for the philosophy of his subject in so far as it pleases his imagina-

[1] Mr. Churton Collins has enumerated a long list of these parallel passages in his 'Bolingbroke,' p. 192.

tion, and answers the purposes of his art. Hence, though Bolingbroke furnished him with the philosophic stem of the poem, he himself grafted upon it many foreign branches of thought for the sake of poetical effect. When, for instance, he wishes to abase human pride, to show the impossibility of man's comprehending the designs of God, he has recourse to the reasoning of Pascal, who abases pride in order to show the need of Revelation. Devotional maxims of his own are introduced, inculcating submission and resignation, and implying a belief in a future state, though such reasoning runs counter to the purely intellectual optimism of Bolingbroke, on which the main argument of the 'Essay' is founded. Hence, as is generally acknowledged, the 'Essay on Man' is very far from answering to the description Pope gives of it in his 'Design:' "If I could flatter myself that this 'Essay' has any merit, it is in steering between the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible, and in forming a temperate, yet not inconsistent, and a short yet not imperfect, system of ethics." The observations which form the premisses of the poem are often not true: the premisses do not always warrant the conclusions: the conclusions are frequently inconsistent with each other. On the whole, Hazlitt scarcely exaggerates when he declares: "All that he says, 'the very words and to the self-same tune,' would prove just as well that whatever is, is wrong, as that whatever is, is right."[1]

But the very failure of the 'Essay' in respect of philosophy brings into stronger relief its remarkable merits as a poem. On this point the opinion of the world in general coincides completely with that of the learned. It is one of the few English poems that have obtained a world-wide reputation. It has been translated into most European languages. There are, in the Catalogue of the British Museum, seven translations into French verse, and one into French prose, coming

[1] 'Lectures on the English Poets' (edition of 1841), p. 147.

down to 1864; five into German, coming down to 1874; five into Italian, coming down to 1856; two into Portuguese; one into Polish; two Polyglot; two into Latin verse. Wieland and Voltaire have written poems in imitation of it. Voltaire calls it "the most beautiful, the most useful, the most sublime didactic poem that has ever been written in any language."[1] Marmontel says: "Pope has shown how high poetry can soar on the wings of philosophy."[2] Dugald Stewart declares: "The 'Essay on Man' is the noblest specimen of philosophical poetry which our language affords; and, with the exception of a very few passages, contains a valuable summary of all that human reason has been able hitherto to advance in justification of the moral government of God."[3] Immanuel Kant used to quote from it frequently in illustration of his lectures. It appears at first sight strange that such praises should have been extorted from eminent doctors of philosophy by a poem in which the Theism of Leibnitz is combined with the Pantheism of Spinoza, and in which the central principle of the Ruling Passion leads directly to conclusions of blind fatalism!

Nevertheless the apparent inconsistency is easy of explanation. Pope's business as a poet was to persuade, not to convince, and he performed his business with consummate skill. He knew that the philosophical thesis he proposed to establish was distinct enough to give unity to his poetic conception, and like a dexterous orator, he threw his whole strength into the task of ornamenting and illustrating the component parts of his 'Essay.' The reader's attention is thus carried on swiftly from one brilliant passage to another, no time being left to reason for reflecting on the weakness or inconsistency of the argument. We admire now the sublime description of the omnipresence of God in nature; now the fine moral invective against the soaring pride and folly of the human mind; now the pregnant sense of the epigrams:

[1] Voltaire, 'Œuvres,' xii. p. 156. 'Epitre.'
[2] 'Eléments de Littérature.' Art.
[3] Works, vol. vii., p. 133.

"What can ennoble sots, and fools, and cowards?
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards;"

or the delicate refinement of the illustrations:

"The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line."

The condensed philosophic aphorisms seem to bear down all scepticism before their pithy positiveness:

"One truth is clear, whatever is, is right."

"Here then we rest:—'the Universal Cause
Acts to one end, but acts by various laws.'"

"For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administered is best:
For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

Nakedly stated, nothing can be more obviously monstrous than the doctrine that God inspires man to do evil in furtherance of his own plans. Yet how specious seems the argument when advanced in such a couplet as

"If plagues and earthquakes break not heaven's design,
Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?"

No one ever, perhaps, seriously believed that men learnt the arts of life by imitating animals, but who is not charmed with the lines—

"Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale."

The simple faith of the 'poor Indian,' and the sportiveness of the lamb ignorant of his destiny, may not be adequate proofs of the theories they are supposed to establish; yet who thinks of the poverty of the argument as he listens to the melody of the verse in which it is conveyed?

These qualities will cause the 'Essay on Man' to be read as long as men care to examine the capacity of the English language for harmonious rhetoric and terse expression. It is

these which have enabled its popularity to survive the decline of the modes of thought which gave it a peculiar interest for the imagination of its earliest readers. When the poem had lost its first novelty, there were some who perceived that its philosophy was open to many of the criticisms of Crousaz; there were others who saw that it could not stand against the ridicule of Voltaire. The Deism, on which it was based gave place in time, as a fashion of thought, first to the scepticism of Hume, and afterwards to the atheism of the French Encyclopædists. On the other hand, even in the first half of the eighteenth century, many men of devout temper, like William Law, author of the 'Serious Call to a Devout Life,' felt that the strength of Christianity lay in its appeal to the heart; and the plausible arguments of Natural Religion, which had commended themselves to the cold Latitudinarianism of society under George the Second, made no impression on souls touched by the inward and spiritual forces of Methodism. Nevertheless, the subject of the 'Essay' is of universal interest, for though the problem with which it deals is one that can never be solved by reason alone, it is yet one that will always invite solution. The particular solution offered by Pope is unsatisfactory, but perhaps not more so than any other among the crowd of systems which in every age have attracted adherents and believers, while it has at least the merit of introducing the reader to a representation of Man which, restricted as it is, is founded on nice observation and subtle reflection. Form and Art triumph even in the midst of error: a framework of fallacious generalisation gives coherence to the epigrammatic statement of a multitude of individual truths.

CHAPTER XII.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PERIOD.

Death of Gay—'First Imitation of Horace'—'Verses to the Imitator of Horace' and 'Letter to a Doctor of Divinity'—'Letter to a Noble Lord'—'Epistle to Arbuthnot'—Death of Pope's Mother and of Arbuthnot.

1733—1735.

POPE'S writings fall naturally into two classes; those which were inspired by some motive of fancy or of abstract reflection; and those which had their origin in personal feeling or in the force of circumstances. To the former class belong the 'Pastorals,' 'Windsor Forest,' the 'Rape of the Lock,' the 'Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady,' the 'Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard,' the 'Essay on Man,' and the 'Moral Essays'; to the latter the 'Dunciad,' the 'Imitations of Horace,' and the Prologue and Epilogue to the 'Satires.' It is, however, to be observed that both kinds of composition are vividly coloured by the poet's own character, and while in the didactic poems, like the 'Moral Essays,' there is a strong personal element, in the 'Satires,' which are mainly the product of personal resentment, the private nature of the master motive is softened and elevated by an atmosphere of generous idealism.

It is noticeable, too, that the 'Rape of the Lock,' the 'Essay on Man,' and the like, spring out of independent efforts of imagination; but the works produced by necessity or personal feeling form a closely connected series. We have already seen that the 'Dunciad' was inspired by the attacks made on the poet while engaged on the Translation of Homer and on the edition of Shakespeare; and we now come to

a class of autobiographical and apologetic compositions in prose and verse, which were no less evidently drawn from him by the active retaliatory measures of those who had smarted from the 'Dunciad.' Of this description are the majority of the 'Imitations of Horace,' the 'Letter to a Noble Lord,' the 'Versifications of Donne,' the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' and the so-called surreptitious and authentic volumes of the Correspondence. Johnson, indeed, says that "the 'Imitations of Horace' seem to have been written as relaxations of Pope's genius," but I think that no one can study these poems in the light of our present knowledge without perceiving how entirely they are the fruit of passion and circumstance.

When the first epistle of the 'Essay on Man' was on the eve of publication an inflammation of the breast suddenly carried off one of the friends to whom Pope was most sincerely attached. Gay had lived with him in close companionship for more than twenty years; and, as often happens with men of a similar temper, his easy and rather feeble amiability, endeared him to the bitter and irritable poet. He died on the 4th of December, 1732, and on the 5th Pope wrote to Swift:—

"I shall never see you now, I believe; one of your principal calls to England is at an end. Indeed he was the most amiable by far, his qualities were the gentlest; but I love you as well and as firmly. Would to God the man we had lost had not been so amiable or so good; but that is a wish for our own sakes, not for his. Sure, if innocence and integrity can deserve happiness, it must be his."

His grief and agitation threw him into a fever, from which as he was recovering, Lord Bolingbroke one day called upon him, and taking up a volume of Horace which was on the table, happened to light upon the first Satire of the Second Book, which, he observed, exactly fitted Pope's case. After he had gone, the poet read it over: in two mornings he had imitated it, and finding his friends pleased with the result, sent it to press within a week. When

it appeared (February 14, 1733), he despatched it to Swift with the 'Epistle to Bathurst,' which had already been published. "I never," says he in his letter of February 16, 1733, "took more pains than with the former of these" (the Epistle) "nor less than with the latter—yet every friend has forced me to print it, though in truth my own single motive was about twenty lines towards the latter end, which you will find out."

The passage Pope here speaks of is that beginning in the original, "O puer ut sis"; and the verse of which he is particularly thinking is—

> "Scilicet uni æquus Virtuti atque ejus amicis,"

which Horace applies to Lucilius, but which Pope appropriates to himself. There was, however, another passage in the Latin which supplied Pope with a motive stronger even than the one he actually avows. Horace says:—

> "At ille
> Qui me commorit (melius non tangere, clamo)
> Flebit, et insignis totâ cantabitur urbe."

Pope's paraphrase is full of animation:

> "Peace is my dear delight—not Fleury's more:
> But touch me, and no minister so sore.
> Whoe'er offends, at some unlucky time
> Slides into verse, and hitches in a rhyme,
> Sacred to ridicule his whole life long,
> And the sad burden of a merry song."

Here, then, is the personal motive of his Satire, plainly avowed; and it is, therefore, on their autobiographical side, as reflecting Pope's ideas of his own character, and his feelings towards his friends and his enemies, that these 'Imitations' are most deeply interesting.

The interlocutor of the poet in the 'Dialogue,' answering to Horace's 'Trebatius,' was William Fortescue, a Devonshire man, who is said to have been an intimate friend of Gay when they were both at Barnstaple Grammar School. Pope

took great pleasure in his society, and Fortescue gave him 'advice without a fee,' probably as to the manner of producing the 'Dunciad,' certainly with regard to his numerous arrangements with his publishers, and on many other occasions. In 1735 Fortescue was made one of the Judges of the Exchequer; in 1738, a Judge of the Common Pleas; and in 1741, Master of the Rolls. An example of his humour survives in the Report of "Stradling *v.* Stiles," published in Pope's and Swift's 'Miscellanies.'

The autobiographical interest of the 'Imitation' begins when the poet deals with 'offenders.' Horace had enumerated in his Satire some of his contemporaries with whom he had quarrelled:

> "Cervius iratus leges minitatur et urnam;
> Canidia Albuci, quibus est inimica, venenum;
> Grande malum Turius, si quid se judice certes."

Pope was ready with his parallel:

> "Slander or poison dread from Delia's rage,
> Hard words or hanging if your judge be ——."

Delia was Mary Howard, widow of Henry, first Earl of Deloraine, and now wife of William Windham, tutor to the Duke of Cumberland. Lord Hervey describes her, in his 'Memoirs,' as "one of the vainest as well as one of the simplest women that ever lived, but to this wretched head there was certainly joined one of the prettiest faces that ever was formed."[1] A report was current in society that she had attempted to poison a Miss Mackenzie, one of the Maids of Honour. Whether Pope had really been 'touched' by her, or whether he merely introduced her name as fitting the context, in view of the scandal attaching to her, is uncertain; but as she was reported to be the mistress of the King, it is likely enough that party spirit prompted the allusion.

[1] Lord Hervey's 'Memoirs of the Reign of George II.' (edition of 1884), *vol. iii.*, 152.

Francis Page, the person satirised in the second line of the couplet, was the son of the Rev. Nicholas Page, Vicar of Bloxham. He was called to the Bar in 1690; was returned M.P. for Huntingdon, on the Whig side, in 1708, with Edward Wortley, and also in 1720 with the same colleague. He was afterwards made one of the Judges of the Common Pleas, in consequence of his vigorous political partizanship. This fact, together with the neatness of the parallel, and the recollection of Page's treatment of the poet's *protégé*, Savage, when the latter was tried before him on a charge of murder, procured for the judge the unenviable distinction of 'hitching in a rhyme.' An amusing story is told by Sir John Hawkins of the effect produced by the couplet. He says that Page sent his clerk to Pope to complain of the allusion. Pope told the young man that the blank might be supplied by other monosyllables than the judge's name. "But, sir," said the clerk, "the judge says that no other word will make sense of the passage." "So then," replied Pope, "it seems that your master is not only a judge but a poet: as that is the case the odds are against me. Give my respects to the judge, and tell him I will not contend with one that has the advantage of me, and he may fill up the blank as he pleases."[1]

The monstrous couplet upon Sappho has no parallel in the Latin original, and an attack so ferocious can have proceeded only from a nature that felt itself wounded in its most sensitive part. It must be regarded, I think, in spite of all other explanations, as the final payment for the 'immoderate fit of laughter' with which Lady Mary admits she received the romantic 'declaration' Pope had made to her in the days of their friendship. The offence had been already partly punished by the allusion in the 'Dunciad' to 'hapless Monsieur,' which the accompanying note rendered intelligible to those who were at all acquainted with the story. Lady Mary, who was herself no stranger to the use of social lampoons,

[1] Note by Sir John Hawkins on Johnson's 'Life of Pope.'

may have retaliated in kind: Pope at any rate believed that she was concerned in the publication both of the 'One Epistle,' the reputed authors of which were Welsted and Smythe, and of the 'Pop upon Pope,' which described a whipping the poet was supposed to have received in Ham Walks, thus inflicting another stab on the feeling originally wounded by the ill-timed merriment of Sappho, the consciousness of physical deformity. The following lines in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' written by him but not published, plainly reveal the intensity of his suffering:

> "Once, and but once, his heedless youth was bit,
> And liked that dangerous thing, a female wit.
> Safe, so he thought, though all the prudent chid;
> He writ no libels, but my Lady did:
> Great odds, in amorous or poetic game,
> Where woman's is the sin, and man's the shame."

The rumour having spread that Sappho was intended for Lady Mary, she, with an amazing want of delicacy and discretion, prevailed on Lord Peterborough, much against his will, to remonstrate with Pope on the outrage. The poet's reply was characteristic. He did not specifically deny the truth of the report. But,

> "He said to me," wrote Lord Peterborough to Lady Mary, "what I had taken the liberty to say to you, that he wondered how the town could apply these lines to any but some noted common woman; that he would be yet more surprised if you should take them to yourself; he named to me four remarkable poetesses and scribblers, Mrs. Centlivre, Mrs. Haywood, Mrs. Manly, and Mrs. Ben (Behn), assuring me that *such* only were the objects of his satire."[1]

This was of course only to aggravate the insult, and Lady Mary accordingly prepared for open war. On March 8, 1733, an advertisement appeared in the 'Daily Post,' of 'Verses addressed to the Imitator of Horace. By a Lady. Printed for A. Dodd, without Temple Bar.' Another edition of this satire

[1] Lady M. W. Montagu's Letters and Works, Moy Thomas's edition, vol. ii., p. 22.

was advertised on the 9th of March, by J. Roberts, which, though identical in other respects, bore no mark of authorship on the title-page. Dodd denounced this edition as piratical, and Roberts replied with a counter advertisement declaring his own edition to be the only correct one. These manœuvres point to a desire on the part of the author or authors of the 'Verses' to mislead the public, and the mystification must have been connived at by Lord Hervey, for Mr. Croker found at Ickworth what he conceived to be the original edition, making no mention of the Lady on the title-page, and containing a manuscript preface and several manuscript corrections and additions, all in Lord Hervey's handwriting, with a new manuscript title-page prepared 'by the author' for a second edition. These circumstances led Mr. Croker to believe that Lord Hervey was the sole author of the 'Verses.'[1] In my opinion they rather confirm the public report of the time that the satire was the work of more than one hand. The original edition (Dodd's) is in the Bodleian Library, with an inscription by Lord Oxford: "The authors of this poem are Lady Mary Wortley, Lord Hervey, and Mr. Windham, under Tutor to the Duke of Cumberland, and married to my Lady Delorraine." Pope himself, it is evident, believed in a double authorship, for he writes to Swift on April 2, 1733:

> "Tell me your opinion as to Lady ——'s or Lord * * *'s performance: they are certainly the top wits of the Court, and you may judge by that single piece what can be done against me, for it was laboured, corrected, pre-commended, and post-disapproved, so as to be disowned by themselves after each had highly cried it up for the other's."

I suspect that the design and the greater part of the verses themselves are to be attributed to Lady Mary. They are written with greater vigour than is usually found in Lord Hervey's style, which, when he uses metre, is, as a rule, mean and dull. On the other hand, the versification of the Satire

[1] Preface to Lord Hervey's 'Memoirs of the Reign of George II.' (edition of 1884), xxxix.-xl.

resembles in places that of the 'Epistle to the Doctor of Divinity,' which is certainly Lord Hervey's. In each the sentence, or clause of the sentence, is often carried beyond the couplet; in each there is a frequent use of the triplet; in each a disregard of the *cæsura*. Parts of the Satire, apparently referring to Lady Mary herself, must plainly have been the work of a male hand, for example, the lines—

> "Not even Youth and Beauty can control
> The universal rancour of thy soul,
> Charms that might soften Superstition's rage,
> Might humble Pride, or thaw the ice of Age."

But however the authorship is to be assigned, the writers knew well where their enemy was most vulnerable. After heaping every kind of insult on Pope's character and intellect, and proclaiming the motive of his satire to be universal malignity against mankind, the verses conclude:

> "Nor thou the justice of the world disown,
> That leaves thee thus an outcast and alone:
> For though in law the murder be to kill,
> In equity the murder is the will.
> Then while with coward hand you stab a name,
> And try at least to assassinate our Fame,
> Like the first bold assassin be thy lot,
> Ne'er be thy guilt forgiven or forgot;
> But as thou hat'st be hated by mankind,
> And with the emblem of thy crooked mind
> Marked on thy back, like Cain, by God's own hand,
> Wander like him accursed through the land."

Not long afterwards the attack was renewed in 'A Letter from a Nobleman at Hampton Court to a Doctor of Divinity,' a feeble performance, wanting almost entirely in point and wholly in design. The writer pleads, in excuse for answering in a 'homely way' a Latin letter addressed to him by the Doctor, that since he found himself 'the titled heir to an estate,' he had taken pains to forget all the Latin he had learnt at school. This, says he, is the way with people of fashion, and he thereupon falls into a long rhapsody on

false wit, which brings him naturally to Pope, against whom, through the remainder of the Epistle, he inveighs as a mere pretender to poetry. The following is a favourable specimen of his satire:

> "But had he not to his eternal shame,
> By trying to deserve a satirist's name,
> Prov'd he can ne'er invent but to defame:
> Had not his *Taste* and *Riches* lately shown
> When he would talk of genius to the Town,
> How ill he chooses when he trusts his own:
> Had he, in modern language, only wrote
> Those rules which Horace and which Vida taught:
> On Garth or Boileau's model built his fame,
> Or sold Broome's labours printed with P–pe's name:
> Had he ne'er aimed at any work beside,
> In glory then he might have lived and died;
> And ever been, though not with genius fired,
> By school-boys quoted, and by girls admired."

This poor stuff was written by John, Lord Hervey, eldest son, since the death of his brother Carr, of the Marquis of Bristol, and Vice-Chamberlain to the Queen. He had been an early acquaintance of Pope, and is mentioned by Gay among those who welcomed the poet on his return from Greece, his name being coupled with that of the 'beautiful Molly Lepel,' to whom he was married later in the same year (1720). He was a great friend and ally of Lady Mary at the time of her rupture with Pope, a fact which probably procured him the first ill-will of the poet. The latter, however, had made no attack upon him before the appearance of the 'First Imitation of Horace' in which he introduces the 'beatus Fannius' of the original in the couplet,

> "The lines are weak, another's pleased to say:
> Lord Fanny spins a thousand such a day."

The point of the name was derived from a suggestion made in a pamphlet of Pulteney's, which had reflected on Hervey's effeminate appearance and epicene habits,[1] and the lines, though

[1] 'A Proper Reply to a late Scurrilous Libel,' 1731.

temptuous, were not malignant. They were keen enough, rever, to exasperate Lord Hervey, who rushed into the r with such weapons as may be imagined from the specimen d above.

'ope now saw his opportunity for a severe retaliation. His ersaries had challenged him openly on ground where they e no match for him, and he made haste to convince them the inequality of the combat. In November, 1733, he rted in the newspapers the following advertisement:

'Whereas a great demand hath been made for an answer to a certain rilous Epistle from a Nobleman to Dr. Sh—r—n; this is to aint the public that it hath been hitherto hindered by what ied a denial of that Epistle by the Noble Lord in the *Daily Courant* lov. 22, affirming that no such Epistle was written by him. But reas that declaration hath since been undeclared by the *Courant*, is to certify, that unless the said Noble Lord shall this week in a ner as public as the injury, deny the said poem to be his, or con- ict the aspersions therein contained, there will with all speed be lished a most proper reply to the same. 1733."

he proper reply is preserved in 'A Letter to a Noble d,' dated November 30, 1733. Though Lord Hervey does appear to have made the required retractation, Pope's letter im was never published. Horace Walpole says that it was ressed at the desire of his uncle, who had obliged Pope by ng an abbey for his friend Southcote. More probably the was moved by considerations of prudence:

There is a woman's war," he writes to Swift on January 6, 1734, lared against me by a certain Lord. His weapons are the same h women and children use: a pin to scratch, and a squirt to utter. I writ a sort of answer, but was ashamed to enter the lists him, and after showing it to some people, suppressed it; other- it was such as was worthy of him and worthy of me."

e had, however, thought it worth while to reprint, in 'Grub Street Journal' of December 6th, 1733, a scene . Ben Jonson's 'Poetaster,' which he considered applicable ie slanderous charges brought against him by Lord Hervey. nad also published on November 5th, 1733, the Versifica-

tion of Donne's Fourth Satire, under the title of 'The Impertinent or a Visit to the Court. A Satire by an Eminent Hand,' which is obviously aimed at the Vice-Chamberlain.

Johnson says of the 'Letter to a Noble Lord' that "to a cool reader of the present time it exhibits nothing but tedious malignity," but Johnson, to whom the character of Sporus appeared the meanest part of the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' was not a fair judge where any of the family of Hervey were concerned. The letter is, in fact, a remarkable piece of satire, interesting, if not in itself, at least from the light it throws on Pope's character and feelings; it also deserves special consideration as the prose prelude to the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot.'[1]

The writer begins by ironically confessing himself Lord Hervey's inferior in all but *one* respect, which however he is surprised to find is precisely the ground on which the latter has chosen to contend with him on equal terms. "When I speak of *you*, my Lord," he says, "it will be with all the deference due to the inequality which Fortune has made between you and myself, but when I speak of your *writings*, my Lord, I must, I can do nothing but trifle." Reverting to Lord Hervey's rank, he recalls the expressions affectedly depreciating the manners of the aristocracy, in the letter to the Doctor of Divinity, and deals with them in a passage of scathing satire foreshadowing the style of 'Junius.'

"I should be obliged indeed to lessen this respect if all the nobility (and especially the elder brothers) are but so many hereditary fools, if the privilege of lords be but to want brains, if noblemen can hardly write or read, if all their business is but to dress and vote, and all their employment in Court to tell lies, flatter in public, slander in private, be false to each other, and follow nothing but self interest. Bless me, my Lord, what an account is this you have given of them? and what would have been said of me had I immolated in this manner, the whole body of the nobility at the stall of a well-fed prebendary."

He then considers what offence he can possibly have given Lord Hervey to make him rush into such an unequal contest.

[1] For the Letter in full, see p. 423 of this volume.

Perhaps, he suggests, Lord Hervey's rancour may have been due to the fact that he himself had voluntarily discontinued the acquaintance with his Lordship and Lady M. W. Montagu, because they had too much wit for him. As to the report that had reached him of their being angry at his satire,

"I never heard," says he, "of the least displeasure you had conceived against me, till I was told that an imitation I had made of Horace had offended some persons, and among them your Lordship. I could not have apprehended that a few general strokes about a lord scribbling carelessly, a pimp, or a spy at Court, a sharper in a gilded chariot, &c.,—that these, I say, should ever be applied as they have been by any malice, but that which is the greatest in the world, the malice of ill people to themselves."

In other words, no one was obliged to wear the cap of 'Lord Fanny' or 'Sappho' unless their conscience pricked them. By the name of Sappho he protested that he could have meant no harm to Lady Mary; but his protestation has a note of irony. "Certainly, I meant it only of such modern Sapphos as imitate much more the lewdness than the genius of the ancient one; and upon whom their wretched brethren frequently bestow both the name and the qualifications thus mentioned." As for Lord Fanny, the name is clearly only a translation of 'Fannius' in the original, and since Lord Hervey avows that he has forgotten his Latin, Pope will tell him who Fannius was.

"This Fannius was, it seems, extremely fond both of his poetry and his person, which appears by the pictures and statues he caused to be made of himself, and by his great diligence to propagate bad verses at Court, and to get them admitted into the library of Augustus. He was moreover of a delicate or effeminate complexion, and constant at the assemblies and operas of those days, when he took it into his head to slander poor Horace:

Ineptus
Fannius, Hermogenis lædat conviva Tigelli;

till it provoked him at last just to name him, give him a lash, and send him whimpering to the ladies,

Discipularum inter jubeo plorare cathedras."

The denial of particular personality, therefore, to the

character of Lord Fanny was certainly meant only to intensify the satire, and the same is probably the case with the character of Sappho. Denials, however, they both are in the literal sense which enables Pope to ask in a fine and rhetorical passage what justice there was in his treatment by Lord Hervey.

"But surely, my Lord, we may say neither the revenge, nor the language you hold, have any proportion to the pretended offence: the appellations of *foe to human kind*, an *enemy* like the *devil* to all that have being; *ungrateful*, *unjust*, deserving to be *whipped*, *blanketed*, *kicked*, nay *killed*; a monster, an assassin whose conversation every man ought to shun, and against whom all doors should be shut; I beseech you, my Lord, had you the least right to give, or to encourage, or justify any other in passing such language as this to me?"

He then dwells upon the methods of attack which his enemies have employed. In the following passages the anguish he suffered from the reflections made on his personal deformity clearly shows itself:

"I am persuaded you can reproach me truly with no great faults, except my natural ones, which I am as ready to own as to do all justice to the contrary beauties in you. It is true, my Lord, I am short, not well shaped, generally ill-dressed, if not sometimes dirty. Your Lordship and Ladyship are still in bloom, your figures such as rival the Apollo of Belvedere and the Venus of Medicis, and your faces so finished that neither sickness nor passion can deprive them of colour."[1]

Resentment raises his style above irony to just and reasonable indignation:

"And would it not be full as well that my poor person should be abused by them as by one of your rank and quality? Cannot Curll do the same? Nay, has he not done it before your Lordship, in the same kind of language and almost the same words? I cannot but think the worthy and discreet clergyman himself will agree it is improper, nay unchristian, to expose the personal defects of our brother; that both such perfect forms as yours and such unfortunate ones as mine proceed from the hand of the same Maker, who fashioneth his vessels as he pleaseth, and that it is not from the shape we can tell whether they are made for honour or dishonour."

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[1] According to Lord Hailes, Lord Hervey used to paint.

He next comes to Hervey's attack upon his morals:

"'How can you talk (my most worthy Lord) of all Pope's works as so many libels, affirm that he has no invention but in defamation, and charge him with selling another man's labours printed with his own name? Fye, my Lord, you forget yourself. He printed not his name before a line of the person's you mention; that person has told you what part he had in it, as may be seen in the conclusion of his notes to the Odyssey."

The audacity with which he cites the misleading statement he had induced Broome to make at the close of the Translation is a remarkable proof of his confidence in the ascendency he possessed over the will of his vain and timid assistant. Most of the concluding pages of the letter are occupied with a somewhat tedious mockery of Lord Hervey's criticisms upon his poetry, but after a while he reverts to the concluding passage of the 'Verses to the Imitator of Horace,' and sternly warning his enemy not to breathe his slander into the ears of the King and Queen, he winds up as follows:

"A strange picture of a man, who had the good fortune to enjoy many friends who will always be remembered as the first ornaments of their age and country; and no enemies that ever contrived to be heard of, except Mr. John Dennis and your Lordship: a man who never wrote a line in which the religion or government of his country, the royal family, or the Ministry, were disrespectfully mentioned; the animosity of any one party gratified at the expense of another; or any censure passed but upon known vice, acknowledged folly, or aggressive impertinence. It is with infinite pleasure he finds that some men, who seem ashamed and afraid of nothing else, are so sensible of his ridicule: and it is for that very reason he resolves (by the grace of God and your Lordship's good leave)

> That, while he breathes no rich or noble knave
> Shall walk the world in credit to his grave."

The purely apologetic strain of the 'Letter to the Noble Lord' is supplemented by the more extended autobiography of the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' which was published in January 1734–5, and is thus described by Pope in his 'Advertisement':

"This paper is a sort of bill of complaint begun many years since, and drawn up by snatches, as the several occasions offered. I had no thought of publishing it, till it pleased some persons of rank and fortune to attack in a very extraordinary manner not only my

writings (of which, being public, the public is judge), but my Person, Morals, and Family, whereof to those who know me not, a truer information may be requisite. Being divided between the necessity to say something of myself, and my own laziness to undertake so awkward a task, I thought it the shortest way to put the last hand to this Epistle."

In the 'Introductory Notes' to the Epistle I have shown the misleading nature of this statement, in so far as relates to the method of the composition, the truth being that more than three-fourths of the Epistle was written in direct answer to the 'Verses to the Imitator of Horace,' and the 'Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity,' while the remaining fourth was radically altered to suit the new context. After such an experience of Pope's good faith with the reader we are naturally inclined to examine with strictness his assertion in the 'Advertisement,' that in the Epistle there is 'not a circumstance but what is true.'

The Epistle is, as he says, 'a sort of bill of complaint,' written in the character of a successful man of letters. The opening describes with great force and vivacity the inconveniences to which his reputation exposes him from fools and flatterers. As to the fools, he can perhaps deal with them, he says, through a Dunciad, but from the worse kind of foe, the flatterer, there is no escape. This makes him break out—

> "Why did I write? what sin, to me unknown,
> Dipped me in ink? my parents' or my own?"

And the answer which the question necessitates gives him an opportunity of introducing his own biography. He wrote, he tells us, because it was the bent of his nature to do so: "I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came." He had published his writings because he found they pleased the best critics from whom the world judges of men and books. Even in those early days, when he was amusing himself with a pure descriptive style, he had suffered not only from the malignant detraction of men like Gildon and Dennis, but from the literary jealousy of a man of genius like Atticus. In spite of env

and slander, he had held on his way, leaving the world of mere professional literature, with its dunces and critics, its patrons and flatterers, to Bufo and the like, and contenting himself with his independence and the society of Gay. Do what he would, however, he found that the world insisted on believing that his satiric genius could never lie dormant, though no one could execrate more than himself all satire aimed against innocent and unoffending persons. True satire must have a moral object, and for his part he sought to chastise knaves alone, of whatever rank or variety, backbiters, libellers, liars, and traitors,—in a word, men like Sporus.

> "Not Fortune's worshipper, not Fashion's fool,
> Not Lucre's madman, not Ambition's tool,
> Not proud, nor servile; be one poet's praise,
> That if he pleased, he pleased by manly ways;
> That flattery, ev'n to kings, he held a shame,
> And thought a lie in prose or verse the same;
> That not in Fancy's maze he wandered long,
> But stooped to Truth, and moralised his song:
> That not for Fame, but Virtue's better end,
> He stood the furious foe, the timid friend,
> The damning critic, half-approving wit,
> The coxcomb hit, or fearing to be hit;
> Laughed at the loss of friends he never had,
> The dull, the proud, the wicked, and the mad;
> The distant threats of vengeance on his head,
> The blow unfelt, the tear he never shed;
> The tale revived, the lie so oft o'erthrown,
> The imputed trash, and dulness not his own;
> The morals blackened, when the writings 'scape,
> The libelled person, and the pictured shape;
> Abuse on all he loved, or loved him, spread,
> A friend in exile, or a father dead;
> The whisper that, to Greatness still too near,
> Perhaps yet vibrates in his Sov'reign's ear—
> Welcome for thee, fair Virtue! all the past:
> For thee, fair Virtue! welcome e'en the last!"

We are thus brought back to the motive of the First Imitation of Horace, avowed to Swift, "Scilicet uni æquus virtuti atque ejus amicis." The reader, marvelling at these passionate protestations, and unable to reconcile them with what he now knows of much of Pope's actual conduct, may be tempted to

ascribe the above passage to deliberate hypocrisy. Such a judgment, however, would be certainly as false as it would be hasty. The verses are plainly full of an ardour, an enthusiasm, a conviction, which could never have been commanded by one who did not for the moment feel what he professed. The language is rather that of a fanatic of self-love, a sphere in which fanaticism is capable of producing moral phænomena quite as astonishing as in religion or politics. Those who judge coolly of human nature in general, and of Pope's in particular, will be ready to believe him sincere in his avowal of motive, and will be chiefly interested in considering the powerful influences that contributed to the growth of such extraordinary self deception.

The most potent element in his opinion of himself was undoubtedly the pride of literary independence and success. Lord Bolingbroke was impressed by the superficial resemblance between the circumstances of Horace and Pope, but the poet himself, it is plain, was aware of their essential unlikeness. The tone of Horace throughout his satire is modest and apologetic; he shelters himself behind the example of Lucilius; he hints pretty plainly to his critics that if they attack him they will find he has powerful friends at his back. Pope describes very happily in another place the characteristics of the Roman poet's manner:

> "But Horace, Sir, was delicate, was nice;
> Bubo observes, he lashed no sort of vice.
> * * * * *
> His sly, polite, insinuating style
> Could please at Court, and make Augustus smile."

He himself, on the contrary, throughout his 'Imitation' is vehement and aggressive. Far from defending himself by precedents, he refers to his predecessors only to show how much better qualified he is, from the independence of his position, to use plainness of speech than were they.

> "Could pensioned Boileau lash, in honest strain,
> Flatterers and bigots, even in Louis' reign?

Could laureate Dryden pimp and friar engage,
Yet neither Charles nor James be in a rage?
And I not strip the gilding off a knave,
Unplaced, unpensioned, no man's heir, or slave?"

Nor was this boasting altogether without excuse. Pope had been the creator of his own fortune. Prejudiced in public opinion by his religion, with the disadvantages of obscure birth and an ill-formed body, perpetually harassed by wearing illness, he had, with fine courage and patience, won for himself a position which allowed him to mix on equal terms with the noble and powerful, whom men of letters like Dryden, and even Addison, had sought to flatter as patrons.

Insensibly, and by a natural turn of thought, he came to regard this brilliant success, due entirely to his literary genius, as a mark of virtue and moral superiority. He affected to depreciate his professional skill; on the other hand he used the language of Pharisaism about his merits as a man.

"I only wish," he wrote to Aaron Hill, "you knew as well as I do, how much I prefer qualities of the heart to those of the head. I vow to God, I never thought any great matter of my poetical capacity; I only thought it a little better, comparatively, than that of some very mean writers who are too proud. But, I do know certainly, my moral life is superior to that of most of the wits of these days."[1]

In the same spirit he exclaims in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot':

"Oh let me live my own, and die so too!
(To live and die is all I have to do:)
Maintain a poet's dignity and ease,
And see what friends, and read what books I please;
Above a patron, though I condescend
Sometimes to call a minister my friend.
I was not born for Court or great affairs:
I pay my debts, believe, and say my prayers;
Can sleep without a poem in my head,
Nor know if Dennis be alive or dead."

Another factor in his estimate of his own merit was his sense of his popularity. Flattered, caressed, even deferred to

[1] Letter from Pope to Hill of January 26, 1730–1.

as he was by all that was most distinguished in the society of the day, it is no wonder that he should have accepted their judgment of himself as just, and should have sought to overwhelm his enemies with the weight of his reputation.

> "Envy must own, I live among the great,
> No pimp of pleasure, and no spy of state,
> With eyes that pry not, tongue that ne'er repeats,
> Fond to spread friendship, but to cover heats;
> To help who want, to forward who excel;
> This all who know me, know; who love me, tell:
> And who unknown defame me, let them be
> Scribblers or peers, alike are mob to me."

Lord Chesterfield's general testimony, and the examples of Dodsley and Johnson aided by his interest, of Deane, Savage, Mrs. Cope, and others supported by his charity, prove that in this passage at least he is claiming no praise to which he is not justly entitled. Though he was not always anxious to 'do good by stealth,' benevolence was a real feature in his strangely-mixed character, and the consciousness of this general benevolence, with the knowledge that it was widely recognized, helped to disguise from him the malignity of his feeling towards those who had offended him personally.

Party spirit again raised him disproportionately in his own opinion. Horace was the poet of the Court, Pope of the Opposition. Horace had alluded to the favour shown by Lælius and Scipio, the leading statesmen of a past age, to Lucilius. Pope, who had already celebrated the virtues of Lord Oxford after his downfall, boasts of his own intimacy with the leaders of the party out of power:

> "There, my retreat the best companions grace,
> Chiefs out of war, and statesmen out of place."

He lived with them, thought with them, shared their aims and councils, and all those rhetorical methods by which an Opposition seek to exalt their own character and blacken the conduct of their rivals, were transferred by him, with extraordinary aptitude, into his quarrel with his private enemies.

Lastly, it must not be forgotten that the ideal element in Pope's satire is unquestionably founded in truth, and that it is natural for men to mistake the conceptions they cherish for the reflection of themselves. Pope's satires were the latest of his literary productions. Though the lines to the author of 'Successio,' and the story of his removal from Twyford School, show that his satiric powers exhibited themselves early, it was the more imaginative side of his genius tha first bore fruit. This part of his character is sometimes over. ooked. Yet he had some reason for calling himself "soft by nature, more a fool than wit." "People of my turn," he had long before written to Caryll, "naturally love quiet."[1] "Mr. Pope," says Swift in a letter to Gay, "has loved a domestic life from his youth."[2] Living as a boy among his books, delighting in the solitude of Windsor Forest, pouring out his thoughts daily in artistic forms of verse or prose, he found in himself the ideals of a student and a recluse.

On the other hand he plunged eagerly into London life. There he had found the means fully to gratify his desires of wealth, fame, and popularity, and had equipped himself with all the panoply of fashionable wit. Nevertheless the spirit of Windsor Forest maintained a constant conflict in his nature with the Genius of the Town. He kept his country ideal apart, and compared it with the actual life about him, greatly to the disadvantage of his time. The contrast was certainly a striking one. In every department of life and thought the standard seemed to be debased. The Memoirs of Lord Hervey show plainly enough how mean and cynical was the prevailing code of manners in the Court of George II. In politics, though the great body of the nation fortunately still lay outside the constitutional machine, and was therefore sound and healthy, the necessity of corruption, unblushingly avowed as an instrument of Parliamentary govern-

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of November or December, 1715, Vol. VI., p. 234.

[2] Letter from Swift to Gay of May 4, 1732.

ment, gave point to the trenchant invective of Bolingbroke's essays in the 'Craftsman.' The South Sea Scheme, and many other kindred projects of the detested Monied Interest, seemed to indicate the existence of wide-spread dishonesty in the commercial world. While there were many excellent parish priests doing their duty like Chaucer's good parson, and while the spiritual and better element of Puritanism was still working like a leaven in society, the epicurean or the servile spirit of the age showed itself among the more highly placed clergy in the characters of Bishops like Talbot and Hoadly, and injuriously affected even finer tempers such as Sherlock and Hare.

There was little in Court or Church to check by force of example the licence of the times. The Press, which, in the days of the 'Tatler' and 'Spectator,' had done so much to organise a sound public opinion, was given over to the violence of faction. An aristocratic society, monopolising all the means of political influence, was therefore left uncontrolled to the pursuit of every selfish interest or indulgence. One weapon, however, remained which, if rightly directed, could be employed in defence of Public Virtue. Satire could still reach the powerful offender,

> "Safe from the Bar, the Pulpit, and the Throne,
> But touched and shamed by ridicule alone."

It is to the credit of Pope, however he may have fallen short of his professions, that he discerned the moral standard of the age to be deserving of satiric rebuke. It is honourable to him also that, in the midst of the corrupt refinement in which he lived, he could distinguish with his praise the simple old-world virtues which, if unregarded in political circles, were still practised in society at large. The charity of the Man of Ross, the healthy manliness of Bathurst, the benevolence of 'humble Allen,' the honesty of Barnard the Quaker, stand out in bold relief amidst the meanness and venality of the Directors, Statesmen, and Lords Spiritual and Temporal

against whom he directs his satire. The qualities that he admired in idea, he believed himself to possess. On the other hand, those whom he personally hated he identified with all that was ignoble and vicious in the character of the age. Wortley Montagu and his wife are constantly being cited in his satires as examples of Avarice: Lord Hervey becomes the type of the servility, the cynicism, and the flippancy of a Whig Court: the Dunces, high and low, are the evil products of literary envy and party journalism. He himself, the representative of just satire, has for his mission to rid society of all such plagues.

Exalted with the greatness of his calling he was, at this period of his life, absorbed with the passion that the world should think of him what he thought of himself. To attain this end all means seemed to him legitimate. At one moment he pursued it fairly under cover of imitating Horace, at another of confiding to Arbuthnot his autobiography in verse; but though professing in the abstract that 'he held a lie in verse or prose the same,' he never scrupled, if pushed to it, to defend himself by 'flat falsehood,' while equivocation seems to have been always admissible in his moral code. "I have not told a lie (which we both abominate)," he writes on one occasion to Teresa Blount, "but equivocated pretty genteelly."[1] It is strange to think that all the time he was uttering, and with conviction, his lofty professions of virtue, he was plotting to confirm the impression made by them on the public mind by a series of frauds which for subtlety and niceness of calculation have no parallel in the history of literature.

The narrative of these, however, I must reserve for another chapter. Meanwhile death was rapidly depriving him of all whom he most dearly loved. The lines with which the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' concludes speak of his mother as if she were still alive, which was not the case. They had, however, been written, and sent in a letter to a friend in Italy—

[1] Letter from Pope to Teresa Blount of August 7 [1716].

perhaps Lyttelton—in the year 1731, and may have been suggested by an accident which happened towards the close of the previous year.

"A very unhappy accident," he writes to Lord Oxford on November 3, 1730, "which befell my mother, of a fall into the fire from which, however, it pleased God she has escaped without more hurt than her back bruised, and now well, and her clothes burnt off, has kept me many days from writing to your Lordship, and acknowledging your kind memory of me, which I will not say is shown by the kind present of brawn, it is shown so many hundred ways. I am sensible of the particular providence of God, as well as of his general on this occasion, and I flatter myself that after my long care and attendance—which is no more than duty, however, and gratitude upon her infirm condition he would not suffer her to end tragically."

Thrice before, in 1721, 1724, and 1729,[1] the old lady had been so dangerously ill that he had feared he should lose her. His casual mention of her in his letters on these occasions shows his deep attachment to her, and his unwearied attention in the midst of his own illness. When he was at Stanton Harcourt completing his Translation, his mother at first remained at Chiswick, and he went backwards and forwards to see her until he prevailed upon her to join him. He afterwards went from Stanton Harcourt to Cirencester on a visit to Lord Bathurst, but he told the Blounts that he should not "leave his mother seven days together."[2] Mrs. Pope died on the 7th of June, 1733, aged 93. She was carried to her grave by six poor men to whom were given suits of dark grey cloth, and followed by six poor women in the same sort of mourning. Her son placed a monument to the memory of her and of his father in the parish church at Twickenham, and in a secret part of his grounds erected an obelisk with the inscription—

Ah Editha!
Matrum Optima!
Mulierum Amantissima!
Vale!

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[1] Compare letters to Caryll, Feb., 1720–21, and October 19, 1729; and to Lord Oxford of Nov. 6, 1724, and January 6, 1728–29.

[2] Letter from Pope to Teresa Blount of August, 1718.

Arbuthnot himself, the old friend and trusted physician of Pope—without whose aid 'the world had wanted many an idle song'—only survived the publication of the Epistle by a month. He was a man of unfailing gaiety, cheerfulness, and amiability, qualities which, like those of Gay, endeared him to the splenetic poet by their contrast with his own. It appears from the correspondence between him and Pope that the idea of the 'Epistle' was suggested by a passage in one of his letters. He had long felt himself to be breaking, and on July 17, 1734, he wrote to his friend:

"I make it my last request that you continue that noble disdain and abhorrence of vice which you seem naturally endued with, but still with a due regard to your own safety; and study more to reform than chastise, though the one often cannot be affected without the other."

Pope in his reply, dated August 2nd, 1734, defends himself by arguing that "general satire in times of general vice has no force and is no punishment." On August 25th he returned to the subject:

"I took very kindly your advice concerning avoiding ill will from writing satire, and it has worked so much upon me, considering the time and state you gave it in, that I determined to address to you one of my epistles written by piecemeal many years, and which I have now made haste to put together; wherein the question is stated, what were, and are my motives of writing, the objections to them, and my answers."

It is interesting to note how deep was the impression made on him by Arbuthnot's counsel. In his satire '1738' he makes his interlocutor advance the same argument, to which he replies in verse with the same reasoning as he had used in the letter to his friend.

The other poems of Pope, which are more distinctly of an autobiographical character, are the 'Imitation of the Second Satire of the Second Book of Horace,' inscribed to Hugh Bethel, and published in 1734, in which he applies Horace's description of the simple manners of Ofella to his own life at Twickenham; and the 'Imitation of the Second Epistle of the Second Book of Horace,' published in 1737, in which he speaks of his boyhood and youth in Windsor

Forest, and asserts his freedom from avarice. The Imi tions addressed respectively to Bolingbroke (published 1738) and to Murray (published in 1737) are more gene and seem to be suggested by the opportunities they offer b for moralising on some of the prevailing vices of the time, also for paying compliments to his friends. The charm 'Imitation of Horace, Odes, Book IV. 1,' addressed to Mur and published in 1736–7, has obviously a compliment motive. The 'Sober Advice from Horace, as delivered in Second Sermon,' was written in June, 1734, and publis in December of the same year. It is described as an imita "*in the manner of* Mr. Pope." Pope sent it in manusc to Bolingbroke, enjoining him to keep the secret. He de the authorship to Caryll, but it was included in the edi of his works published by Dodsley in 1738. He was doubt moved to the imitation by the love of finding ingenious pa lels, and by the desire of amusing those who were not strict to disapprove on principle of the morality of the pi As, however, it was not published in any edition later t Dodsley's, and was ignored by Warburton, it may be assu that the poet, either by the advice of the latter, or from own feeling, was desirous to suppress it.

Whatever value is to be attached to the 'Imitation Horace' and to the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' as chapter autobiography, there can be but one opinion as to their liter merit. The ingenuity of the parallels in the one, and the e spirit, breeding and dignity in the style of both, place t among the most delightful compositions in the Eng language. As we revert to the starting point of Pope's lite career, and compare these works with the 'Pastorals' other poems written when he was in bondage to the *style* of classics, we perceive how completely he had attained the ob he had set before his mind in the 'Essay on Criticism,' how, by mastering the true spirit and method of the g writers of antiquity, he had learned to apply them to his language and his own time.

CHAPTER XIII.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PERIOD.

Edition of Wycherley's Works—Clandestine Dealings with Curll—Surreptitious Edition of Correspondence in 1735—Authorised Edition of 1737—Publication of Correspondence with Swift.

1729—1741.

In dealing with Pope's clandestine publication of his correspondence, I shall take the facts of the case to have been conclusively established by Mr. Elwin's exhaustive examination, and shall confine myself to such a narrative as may render as intelligible as possible the intricacies of the poet's extraordinary plot. It will be seen that the fraud was of a twofold nature, part of it relating to the manner in which the correspondence was published, and part to the alteration of the letters themselves. The key to Pope's proceedings is to be found in the 'Narrative of the Method by which Mr. Pope's Private Letters were Procured and Published by Edmund Curll, Bookseller,' which was published by Cooper in 1735, and in the 'Preface prefixed to the First Genuine Edition in Quarto, 1737'; both being read in connection with the actual facts as we now know them.

From the 'Narrative' it appears that the starting point of the whole conspiracy was the publication by Curll in 1726 of Pope's correspondence with Cromwell. We cannot of course know exactly what were the poet's feelings on this occasion, but it may be inferred that he was at first annoyed at being shown to the public corresponding with a person so insignificant as Cromwell. He spoke of the correspondence to Caryll as "very unfit to see the light in many regards,"[1] and he afterwards pre-

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of Oct. 5, 1727.

tended to Spence that it was written with an intention not immediately apparent. He also affected to depreciate the character of the letters in a note to the 'Dunciad.'[1] Had he published the authorized edition of his letters in 1726 instead of in 1737 the language of the following paragraph of the Preface to that edition, which can now only be regarded as rhetorical, might have been accepted as sincere.

"But however this collection may be received, we cannot but lament the *cause*, and the *necessity* of such a publication, and heartily wish no honest man may be reduced to the same. To state the case fairly in the present situation. A bookseller advertises his intention to publish your letters; he openly promises encouragement, or even pecuniary rewards, to those who will help him to any; and engages to insert whatever they shall send. Any scandal is sure of a reception, and any enemy who sends it free from a discovery. Any domestic or servant, who can snatch a letter from your pocket or cabinet, is encouraged to that vile practice. If the quantity falls short of a volume, anything else shall be joined with it, more especially scandal, which the collector can think for his interest, all recommended under your name. You have not only theft to fear, but forgery. Any bookseller, though conscious in what manner they were obtained, not caring what may be the consequence to your fame or quiet, will sell and dispense them in town and country. The better your reputation is, the more your name will cause them to be demanded, and consequently the more you will be injured. The injury is of such a nature as the law, which does not punish for *intentions*, cannot prevent; and when done may punish, but not redress. You are therefore reduced either to enter into a personal treaty with such a man (which, though the readiest, is the meanest of all methods), or to take such other measures to suppress them as are contrary to your inclination, or to publish them, as are contrary to your modesty."

Finding, however, that the public, ever greedy for personality, were interested in the correspondence, Pope began to view the matter with different eyes. Whether he conceived the design of publishing his own correspondence as early as 1726 is uncertain: we only know that almost immediately after the appearance of Curll's volume containing his correspondence with Cromwell he became persistent in his applications to Caryll to return him his letters, and that he made the same request to Lord Digby, to the widow of Edward Blount,

[1] Note to Dunciad, ii. 70.

and to other friends. Caryll did not comply with his wishes till the spring of 1729, by which time Pope was in the thick of his quarrel with the Dunces, and perceived that his letters if published would afford favourable testimony of his character.

"If I have not so soon replied to your very friendly letter," he writes to Caryll on July 8, 1729, "as it well deserved, I must tell you it was not from neglecting, but thinking of you; for I have been these three weeks in full employment and amusement in reviewing the whole correspondence I have had with two or three of my most select friends, whose letters I have read quite through, and thereby passed over all my life in idea, and tasted over again all the pleasing intimacies and agreeable obligations I owed them. Some of my own letters have been returned to me, which I have put into order, with theirs, and it makes altogether an unimportant, indeed, but yet an innocent history of myself. . . . I thank God, above all, for finding so few parts of my life that I need to be ashamed of, no correspondence or intimacies with any but good deserving people, and no opinions that I need blush for, or actions, as I hope, that need to make my friends blush for me."

To Lord Oxford in September of the same year he made a further claim on behalf of his correspondence.

"As the rest of the work I told you of—that of collecting the papers and letters of many other correspondents—advances now to some bulk, I think more and more of it, as finding what a number of facts they will settle the truth of, both relating to history and criticism, and parts of private life and character of the eminent men of my time."[1]

When these words were written it is plain that Pope had resolved to publish his letters, and that he had taken the first step in execution of his design. Captain Shrimpton, who had married the widow of Wycherley, had placed the papers of the dramatist in the hands of Theobald, solicitor to the Shrimpton family, who edited them in a volume which appeared in 1728. Pope, to whom Wycherley had submitted his manuscripts during his life-time, claimed to have an interest in the matter, and made an application to Lord Oxford.

[1] Letter from Pope to Lord Oxford of Sept. 15, 1729.

"The mention of your library, which I should envy s one who both makes a good use of it himself, and suffers so, brings back into my mind a request I have had at he year and more,—that you would suffer some original pape both of my own and some of my friends, to lie in yo London. There seems already to be an occasion of it fro tion of certain posthumous pieces of Mr. Wycherley, ver derogatory to his memory, as well as injurious to me, v sole supervisal of them committed to me, at his earnest life-time; and something will be necessary to be done t his and my reputation, which the letters under his hanc dantly do: for which particular reason I desire to have in your lordship's hands."[1]

The letters of Wycherley, both as actually writt published by Pope, show that the former had with manuscripts from the poet's keeping, and was not act unreservedly upon his advice; there was therefo in the posthumous volume which could injuriously poet's reputation. Lord Oxford, however, who judge of the hollowness of the pretext, gave his the proposal, and Pope, having gained his first point to develop his plan.

"All the favour I would beg of your lordship herein," his next letter, dated October 6, 1729, "is to give l may be said the originals are in your library, which t as soon as you will give orders to any one to receive t which I earnestly request. I would not appear myself of them, but any man else may, or even the bookseller to have procured copies of them—formerly or now it is eq

Though Lord Oxford must have seen that he made a partner in a trick, he still raised no obj the poet, perceiving that he might do as he plea character so feeble, did not hesitate to go beyond given him. He brought out his volume—contain other literary remains of Wycherley the correspon himself—as a supplement to Theobald's.

"I consulted Mr. Lewis," he writes to Lord Oxford, turn of the preface to those papers relating to Mr. Wy

[1] Letter from Pope to Lord Oxford of Sept. 15, 172

have exceeded perhaps my commission in one point, though we both judged it the right way, for I have made the publishers say that your lordship permitted them a copy of some of the papers from the library, where the originals remain as testimonies of the truth." [1]

Whatever hopes Pope had formed from the publication of his carefully prepared correspondence with Wycherley were disappointed. The public showed no interest in the dramatist's memory, and the volume proved unsaleable. No further mention is made of the letters till 1733. In that year were published the 'Verses to the Imitator of Horace,' a satire which, in spite of Pope's pretended indifference, evidently caused him acute suffering, especially in the passages reflecting on his personal deformity and the lowness of his birth. Not long afterwards, Curll, having advertised a Life of the poet, the latter determined to employ his old enemy to execute the schemes for his own glorification over which he had long been brooding.

The series of measures which he took to effect this purpose were of extraordinary subtlety. In the first place he invented an imaginary enemy for himself, whom he put into communication with Curll under the signature of P. T. In order to gain the ear of the bookseller, P. T. represented himself as a person who, though well-acquainted with the poet's history, had not been treated by him in a fitting manner; and, throughout the correspondence, he supports with great consistency the character of this malignant but timid enemy, at one time hinting at his eagerness to do Pope an ill-turn, at another his apprehensions lest the latter should detect his hand in the business. At the same time he affected to deal with candour, pointing out to Curll that "it is certain some late pamphlets are not fair in respect to his [Pope's] father"; while in a second letter he appealed to the publisher's cupidity by declaring:

"There have lately fallen into my hands a large collection of his letters, from the former part of his days till the year 1727, which

[1] Letter from Pope to Lord Oxford of Oct. 16, 1729.

being more considerable than any yet seen, and opening very m scenes new to the world, will alone make a perfect and the authentic life and memoirs of him that could be."[1]

If the publisher would print them he might have them fr P. T. for a nominal sum; but, said P. T.,

"You must put out an Advertisement, for otherwise I shall not justified, to some people who have influence, and on whom I ha some dependence, unless it seem to the public eye as no entire act mine; but I may be justified and excused if, after they see such collection is made by you, I acknowledge I sent some letters to co tribute thereto."[2]

Curll, not having yet seen the letters, was too cautious advertise them as P. T. required, so that the negotiations this occasion came to nothing. In March, 1735, howeve Curll, acting from some motive which does not appear, sent Pope P. T.'s two letters, with the proposed Advertisement, ar offered the poet a treaty of peace. Pope's only answer w to insert an Advertisement in three papers, declaring that h knew of no such person as P. T., and that believing the pr tended letters to be a forgery, he should not trouble himse about the matter.

P. T., seeing the Advertisement, renewed his advances Curll on April 4th, 1735. He gently reproached the bool seller for his conduct towards himself, but said that he w still inclined to do him a service, and that since his last con munication with him he had, at his own expense, printed th letters, which Curll might have, on paying for the paper an print, and allowing handsomely for the copy. The latte however, must, in compliance with his former condition insert in the papers the advertisement he required. On th 3rd of March preceding the date of this letter Pope ha asked Lord Oxford for the loan of "the bound book of copies letters" which he had deposited in his library, and it seem probable that it was used for the printing of which P. T speaks above.

[1] Letter from P. T. to Curll of Nov 15, 1733.

[2] Ibid.

Curll now agreed to the conditions specified by P. T. Matters were thus brought to the delicate point at which it was absolutely necessary that some personal communication should take place between the contracting parties. It would, no doubt, have seemed natural enough to Curll that a person so timid as P. T. had shewn himself should prefer to employ an agent; at any rate he consented to deal with P. T. through a representative, and "on the 7th of May," says he, "R. S., a short squat man, came to my house, not at eight but near ten at night. He had on a clergyman's gown, and his neck was surrounded with a large lawn barrister's band."[1] It was afterwards believed that Pope's agent was James Worsdale, a painter, dramatist, and actor, well-known at the time for his talents as a mimic, and his powers of impersonation. He was said by some to be a natural son of Sir Godfrey Kneller. Mrs. Piozzi describes him as "a sad fellow, but very comical as a buffoon. He was the original Lady Pentweazle, and was employed as pimp and parasite by Thrale and Murphy in their merry hours. His taking off of the old Duchess of Marlborough, Sarah Jennings, was particularly humoursome."[2] A man of this sort was precisely the instrument that Pope required. Worsdale seems to have played his part to perfection, and to have given an admirable air of reality to the mythical character of P. T.

R. S. brought with him a book in sheets almost finished, with about a dozen original letters as vouchers, and he promised Curll that he should have the whole at their next meeting. The bookseller, who knew Pope's handwriting from the letters to Cromwell, was satisfied with the evidence thus produced, and undertook the publication. On the 12th of May R. S. sent for Curll at the Standard Tavern, Leicester Fields, where the latter paid him ten pounds on account, and gave him a note of hand for fifteen pounds negotiable in a

[1] Curll's 'Initial Correspondence,' Vol. VI. p. 442.

[2] 'Autobiography of Mrs. Piozzi' (2nd edition), vol. ii., p. 156.

month. In return Curll was to receive 600 books, 50 of which had been already sent to his shop, and while he and R. S. were together two porters brought to the house five bundles, each containing, as R. S. said, fifty books. In reality there were only 38 volumes in each bundle, and every volume was wanting in many of the letters which had been advertised. The publication was to begin as soon as the books were received, Curll having already advertised the book in the 'Daily Post-Boy' of that day, and having made affidavit that he was in possession of the originals of the letters.

Thus far everything seemed to have favoured Pope's scheme. He had effected what he desired, the publication of his correspondence, and he had so contrived at the same time that he would be able to denounce the publication as another piratical enterprise on the part of Curll. But in his subtle system of calculation he now over-reached himself. Anxious that the book should have a wide notoriety, and that Curll should derive from it the smallest possible profit, he had provided in his plan for both these objects. The books had hardly been published an hour when they were seized by a warrant from the House of Lords. On January 31, 1721–2, the Peers had voted it a breach of privilege to publish the writings of any member of their body without his consent. Curll's advertisement of the volume (framed by P. T.) gave a list of the persons to whom Pope's letters were addressed, '*with the respective answers of each correspondent*,' and on the list appeared the names of the Earls of Halifax and Burlington; though in fact the collection did not contain a letter from a single peer. Curll himself, and Wilford, the publisher of the 'Post-Boy' in which the advertisement of the letters had been inserted, were summoned before the Lords, but were discharged with an order to appear again the next day.

In the meantime R. S. (or Smythe), hearing of the seizure, posted off, as he wrote to Curll on the following day, with the news to P. T. Here was a proof, as that 'old gentleman' pointed out, of the necessity of extreme caution in

dealing with such a vigilant person as Pope. How imprudent of Curll to have advertised the names of Lords! how premature, too, to announce that he was in possession of *all* the originals! Fortunate it was that he had not yet received these, or they would have been seized by the Lords! Meantime all would be well if Curll would only follow P. T.'s directions. As Pope's object, Smythe said, was evidently to suppress the book, and find out who gave the letters, Curll might disappoint him if, to the enquiries of the Lords, he would merely answer that he had the letters from different hands, that he had paid for them, and had *printed* them as he had printed Cromwell's on the former occasion. The publication itself could not be delayed, for P. T., with wonderful caution, had prepared another title-page, in which Curll's name had been left out, and the words 'Printed and sold by the booksellers of London and Westminster' substituted, so that Curll could no longer be regarded as the sole publisher. In conclusion Smythe promised him a fresh batch of correspondence with Swift, the late Lord Oxford, Atterbury, and Bolingbroke.

Pope evidently hoped that Curll's cupidity would lead him to act upon his advice. He was mistaken. The publisher at last began to suspect that Pope himself had been managing the whole transaction, and he was determined to be no longer his dupe. He wrote to Smythe on the 15th of May that he was 'just again going to the Lords to finish Pope;' and he begged that the sheets wanting to complete the first fifty books might be sent to him with the three hundred books still due to him, on the delivery of which he promised to pay Smythe £20 more. When he appeared before the House of Lords, Lord Ilay (Pope's neighbour at Twickenham), who had been the first to call the attention of the Peers to Curll's advertisement, said that he had one of the books at home which on the 117th page, in a letter to Jervas, contained some abuse of the Earl of Burlington. The books seized by the House of Lords being in sheets, Curll was directed to take the sheets and to fold one entire book for the use of the House. This he did

but the Peers, on examination, could not find in it the letter to Jervas. They gave the book to Curll, and asked him if it was the same he had advertised. He replied that it was; but on examining it further, he said that the title-page had been altered, and a preface inserted. Searching questions were then put to him as to the manner in which he obtained the letters, to all of which he gave straightforward answers. Finally, not finding either the abuse of Lord Burlington, or any letter from a peer in the edition, the House directed that the books should be restored to Curll.

R. S., keeping up his character with admirable consistency, sent Curll a line of congratulation, and told him that he was just starting for the old gentleman's to carry him the joyful news, and to have his orders for what he promised. Immediately after the interview, however, he wrote that he had found P. T. in a very different humour from what he left him, being very angry that Curll had not acted upon his advice, and at a report that the publisher had named Smythe to the Lords as the person from whom he had received the books, thereby furnishing a clue to P. T.'s identity. The old gentleman would not send him any more books till twenty pounds had been enclosed in a note on Curll's bankers to an address named, in token of Curll's confidence in P. T. To this letter Curll returned an angry answer, denying that he had betrayed any trust, and declaring that, if the books due to him were not forwarded at once, he would print all the letters sent him by P. T., and give them in on oath to the Lord Chancellor. The threat produced an immediate effect. Smythe promised to bring the remainder of the impression at an early date. He pretended to be tired of the capricious temper of the old gentleman, who, he said, suspected his own shadow. Curll, however, was no longer to be cajoled, and before the date named by Smythe for the delivery of the books he advertised, as soon to be published, what he called, with reference to P. T.'s signature, the 'Initial Correspondence.'

Pope was now placed in an awkward position. The intimate

knowledge he had shown of Curll's proceedings, as well as the contrivance respecting the letter to Jervas, and the alterations made in his favour, in a volume compiled by a pretended enemy, had already caused his conduct to be suspected, and the suspicion would be presently aggravated by the publication of the correspondence between Curll and P. T. But the poet's ingenuity was equal to the occasion. After Curll's examination before the House of Lords, Pope had inserted an advertisement in the 'Daily Post-boy,' stating that 'some of the letters could only be procured from his own library or that of a noble lord,' and promising twenty guineas to either Smythe or P. T. if they 'would discover the whole affair,' and forty guineas if they 'could prove that they had acted by the direction of any other person.' As soon as Curll had issued his advertisement announcing the approaching publication of the 'Initial Correspondence,' P. T. and Smythe put out a counter advertisement, declaring that, as Curll had not kept terms with them, they, on their side, would publish his letters to them, which, said they, "would open a scene of baseness and foul dealing that would sufficiently show to mankind his character and conduct." They had merely helped Curll to the letters from mercenary motives, and could give him no title whatever to them, so that "every bookseller would be indemnified every way from any possible prosecution or molestation of the said E. Curll."

Having thus unblushingly proclaimed their venal characters, they prepared the public to believe that they would take advantage of the reward offered to them by Pope for the discovery of the conspiracy, and accordingly the 'Narrative of the Method by which Mr. Pope's Private Letters were procured by Edmund Curll, Bookseller,' was naturally supposed to be founded on their statements. This narrative was published in June, 1735, by Cooper, a bookseller of the day, who reprinted the Correspondence, believing, from P. T.'s and Smythe's advertisement, that he was secure from prosecution by Curll. In this manner Pope got the start of his adversary, who did

not publish the 'Initial Correspondence' till July, and as few persons troubled themselves to understand the complications of the plot, the seeming consistency of the 'Narrative' produced an impression in Pope's favour which was not effaced by the subsequent corrections of Curll.

P. T. and Smythe having, it was to be presumed, pocketed their reward, now vanished from the stage. But the drama of the correspondence was not yet concluded.

"Since I saw you," Pope writes to Lord Oxford on June 17th, 1735, "I have learnt of an excellent machine of Curll's, or rather his director's, to engraft a lie upon, to make me seem more concerned than I was in the affair of the letters. It is so artful an one that I longed to tell it you—not that I will enter into any controversy with such a dog. But I believe it will occasion a thing you will not be sorry for, relating to the Bishop of Rochester's letters and papers."

All that Curll had really done was to issue a new edition of the printed books purchased from P. T., under the title of 'Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence,' and to announce the future appearance of a second volume of the same, containing among other miscellaneous matter 'Atterbury's Letters to Mr. Pope.' The second volume appeared in July, 1735. It contained only three letters from Atterbury to Pope. One of them had been printed by the Bishop himself; the other two Pope declared to be forgeries, but both were in any case of trivial importance, as one of them had been already printed in a Translation of Bayle's Dictionary, and the other mainly consisted of poetical quotations. They served Pope's purpose, however, sufficiently well. On the 15th of July, 1735, he inserted in the 'London Gazette' the following advertisement:

"Whereas several booksellers have printed several surreptitious and incorrect editions of letters of mine, some of which are not so, and others interpolated; and whereas there are daily advertisements of second and third volumes of more such letters, particularly my correspondence with the late Bishop of Rochester, I think myself under a necessity to publish such of the said letters as are genuine, with the addition of some others of a nature less insignificant, especially those which passed between the said Bishop and myself, or were in any way related to him, which shall be printed with all convenient speed."

In spite of this promised speed nothing was done towards issuing the 'genuine' edition till March, 1736, when a letter from Pope to Fortescue shows that the poet had resolved to publish the volume by subscription.[1] The subscription was a guinea for a quarto volume. No great eagerness to subscribe was shown, and the scheme might have fallen through had it not been for the liberality of Ralph Allen, of Bath, who, being struck with the benevolent and elevated feeling of the letters already published, offered to defray the cost of printing. Pope replied that "he would not serve his private fame entirely at another's expense, but would accept the assistance in any moderate degree," meaning that he would allow Allen to provide for any of the outlay that was not covered by the subscriptions.[2] All difficulties as to the subscription list were thus overcome, and the copyright of the edition was purchased by Dodsley, so that probably enough, as Johnson heard, the book produced 'sufficient profit.' It was published on May 18th, 1737, in folio and quarto, and soon afterwards in octavo, so as to match the various sizes of the poet's other works.

The preface to the edition in quarto was historic and apologetic. It recounted the clandestine correspondence of the Cromwell letters, the recovery of letters from the poet's friends, the destruction of three-fourths of those thus recovered, the depositing of the remainder in Lord Oxford's library, and the publication of the letters to Wycherley. Here the history ended and the apology began. Pope's object was to prove the necessity of the authorised publication, and after adducing several reasons for this, he proceeded as follows:

"The unwarrantable publication of his letters hath at least done him this service, to show he has constantly enjoyed the friendship of worthy men; and that if a catalogue were to be taken of his friends and his enemies, he needs not to blush at either. Many of them having been written in the most trying occurrences, and all in the openness of friendship, are a proof what were his real sentiments as they flowed straight from the heart, and fresh from the occasion,

[1] Letter from Pope to Fortescue of March 26, 1736.

[2] Letter from Pope to Allen of June 5, 1736.

without the least thought that ever the world should be witness to them. Had he sat down with a design to draw his own picture, he could not have done it so truly; for whoever sits for it, whether to himself or another, will inevitably find the features more composed, than his appear in those letters. But if an author's hand, like a painter's, be more distinguishable in a slight sketch than in a finished picture, this very carelessness will make them the better known from such counterfeits as have been, and may be, imputed to him, either through a mercenary, or a malicious design."

It is strange to think that a volume thus introduced to the world should have contained letters which, from first to last, were most carefully revised, corrected, and rearranged with a view to the impression intended to be created in the public mind. It has been already said that this was the case with the letters of Wycherley, and here the proceedings of the poet may be traced by any one who takes the trouble to compare the correspondence, as published by Pope, with the originals, as they came from the mind of Wycherley, and are preserved in this volume. But the fiction was carried on still more extensively in Pope's manipulation of the Caryll correspondence. In the authorised edition of 1737 there were letters from Pope to Blount, Addison, Congreve, Wycherley, Steele, Trumbull, and Digby, which were long supposed to have been actually written to the persons to whom they were addressed. The story of the discovery of their fictitious character is singular and romantic. About the middle of the present century a Roman Catholic priest, who had charge of a farmhouse on the Ladyholt property, informed the late Mr. Wentworth Dilke that there were some documents, relating to the Caryll family, stored away in a half-ruined outhouse attached to this building, in a state of decay which made it desirable if possible to destroy them. Mr. Dilke requested that before this was done he should be allowed to see them. Leave having been obtained, he proceeded to examine the papers, set by set, and, where they were useless, to burn them in a bonfire in the court-yard of the farm-house. In the midst of a quantity of uninteresting MSS. at last appeared a letter-book in Caryll's hand containing copies of Pope's letters

to him. Almost at the same time another correspondent, knowing nothing of Mr. Dilke's discovery, wrote to Mr. Murray informing him that he possessed a letter of Pope to Caryll of December 5th, 1726, asking for the return of the letters he had written him.[1] It now appeared that Caryll, probably desirous of preserving some memorial of his friendship with a famous man, had taken the trouble to transcribe the letters before complying with Pope's request to return them.

The documents thus brought to light revealed for the first time the methods pursued by the poet. Caryll died on the 6th of April, 1736, and Pope at once proceeded to treat the letters which he had addressed to him exactly as if they were the matter of some poetical composition which he had resolved to cast into a new form. The public would not have been interested in the sermons he was in the habit of sending to Caryll, of whom they knew nothing; but as addressed to Steele, Addison, and Congreve, even such generalities acquired a particular interest, and seemed to throw light on the relations existing between himself and these celebrated men. It is needless to dwell on the details of the fraud, which have been fully exposed in the Introduction to this Edition, and will be readily intelligible to all who study Pope's correspondence.

Nor will it be necessary to track minutely Pope's subterranean workings to procure the publication of the correspondence between himself and Swift. His efforts to induce the Dean to return his letters date from the publication of Curll's volume in 1735: Swift, after long resistance, returned them to him by Lord Orrery in July, 1737. The correspondence was published in England in 1741, as a sequel to the quarto of 1737, and also in folio and octavo. In the Preface to the quarto it is stated that the letters are "copied from an impression sent from Dublin, and said to have been printed by the Dean's direction." Whatever was the truth as to the place

[1] From the information of Mr. Murray.

where the correspondence was first published—and Faulkner the Irish publisher, always declared that the first edition was published in London—there can be no doubt that the Dublin edition was printed, by the direction of Swift, from a volume sent to him from England. Though Pope professed to be annoyed at the publication of the letters, and laid the responsibility of their appearance on others, there is the strongest reason to believe that the volume from which they were reprinted was sent to the Dean by himself, and that it was itself printed from manuscripts which he had supplied.

I have recited the whole of this sorry tale without reserve or apology. The facts speak for themselves. They show that, to exalt his own reputation, Pope, on three several occasions, deliberately deceived the public by conniving at the publication of his correspondence, while at the same time protesting that this had been effected without his knowledge and against his wish. They show that he had no scruple whatever in altering and transposing his original letters, and in readdressing them to persons to whom they had never been sent. Lastly, they show that, in the execution of his schemes, there was no form of deceit, from equivocation to direct falsehood, which he hesitated to employ, and that not even the obligations of friendship were sacred from the exactions of his vanity and self-love. From the moralist's point of view the case must go undefended. Nothing can be said in arrest of judgment except, perhaps, that Retribution, however her foot may have halted, has already in the most crushing form overtaken the offender. The publication of his correspondence, which Pope, in his passion for fame, had hoped would brighten his character among his contemporaries, has fastened upon his memory, in the judgment of posterity, a stain that cannot be effaced.

But the writers and readers of biography must necessarily look at the object of their interest with other feelings besides those of the moralist. Men's lives are thought worthy of commemoration because they have permanently contributed to the glory of their countrymen: "sui memores alios fecere me

rendo." Those who undertake to furnish the world with a faithful portrait of the conduct and character of such men are expected to proceed in their task with admiration and, wherever it is possible, with sympathy; and to allow oneself to be so disgusted by the meanness of some of their conduct, or even of one element in their character, as to write of them in a spirit of hostility, would be to lose all sense of the just proportions of one's subject. Especially is this the case in the life of a famous man of letters like Pope. The feelings of the general reader are well expressed by Gray in a letter to Walpole:

> "I can say no more for Mr. Pope, for what you keep in reserve may be worse than all the rest. It is natural to wish the finest writer, one of them, we ever had, should be an honest man. It is for the interest even of that virtue, whose friend he professed himself, and whose beauties he sung, that he should not be found a dirty animal."

He adds with great justice,

> "But, however, this is Mr. Warburton's business, not mine, who may scribble his pen to the stumps, and all in vain, if these facts are so."[1]

Yet without distorting facts and probabilities, as Warburton and Roscoe have done to serve Pope's interest, it is still legitimate to place before the reader those considerations of humanity which may help to separate 'one of the finest writers we ever had' from the class of 'dirty animals' like Joseph Surface, in which Macaulay with his passion for rhetorical effect endeavours to include him.

In the first place it is to be remembered that the frauds connected with the correspondence are not isolated actions springing simply out of a diseased passion for applause, but are incidents in a protracted literary war. The letters were, in part at least, weapons, however illegitimate, of self-defence, employed by a man of unbounded ambition, whose opportunities of fame had been confined within a single channel, and that a literary one, and who found the reputation, which was the ruling passion of a life constantly tortured by disease

[1] Letter from Gray to Walpole of February 3, 1746.

and anxiety, threatened by a crowd of malignant enemies. The 'Correspondence' was the sequel, and to a considerable extent, the answer to the 'One Epistle' of Smythe and Welsted, the 'Verses to the Imitator of Horace' of Lady M. W. Montagu, and the 'Epistle to the Doctor of Divinity' of Lord Hervey.

The matter of the letters themselves, also, must be distinguished from the manner of their publication. The taste for such studied writing as is found in Pope's letters no doubt very soon disappeared, and those who adopted a more natural and conversational style spoke of it with dislike.

"I found this consequence," writes Cowper to Unwin, "attending or likely to attend, the eulogium you bestowed—if my friend though me witty before, he shall think me ten times more witty hereafter; where I joked once, I will joke five times; and for one sensible remark, I will send him a dozen. Now this foolish vanity would have spoiled me quite, and have made me as disgusting a letter writer as Pope, who seems to have thought that unless a sentence was well-turned, and every period pointed with some conceit, it was not worth the carriage. Accordingly he is to me, except in very few instances, the most disagreeable maker of epistles I ever met with."[1]

Few modern readers are likely to think very differently. Nevertheless, we know that what Johnson calls the "perpetual and unclouded effulgence of general benevolence and particular fondness" which prevails through Pope's letters, was admired by the age in which it was written. It deeply impressed ordinary but representative men like Spence and Allen, and, as far as the sentiment went, was approved of even by a man so fastidious as Gray.[2]

A taste that seems to us so strange is yet capable of ready explanation. I have already spoken of the ideal which Pope cherished in his own mind, and which ran counter to the spirit of his times. The age was above all things political. Politics was the road by which almost all public men, including men of letters, hoped to achieve wealth and honour. As a natural

[1] Letter from Cowper to Unwin, June 8, 1780.

[2] Norton Nichols' 'Reminiscences of Gray,' p. 37.

consequence the thought of the time was social rather than individual; the wit of the coffee-houses and clubs, the gossip of Court and Parliament, prevailed over the reflection of the retired philosopher. Pope, excluded by force of circumstances from political life, while playing an active part in the bustling scene, felt within himself something discordant with the dominant fashion. His early literary tastes were always in his mind, and the moral and philosophical discourses which, in the midst of his town life, he poured forth to Caryll proceeded from a genuine part of his nature. These sentiments of 'liberality, gratitude, constancy, and tenderness' distributed, when the correspondence was published, through letters supposed to be addressed to the leading men of the day, struck, as they could never have done had they been the hollow phrases of mere hypocrisy, an answering chord in the hearts of men who, oppressed by the materialising, and often corrupting, influences of politics, thirsted for an expression of their more generous emotions.

As to the character of the frauds themselves, some part of them may fairly be ascribed to an unhappiness of circumstance. It is probable enough that even honourable Roman Catholics were inclined to regard equivocation as an excusable weapon of self-defence against the tyranny of the Penal Laws; hence Pope, regarding what others held to be legitimate in particular cases as a regular system, had acquired the habit of paltering and parleying with his own conscience, so as to be able to find on all occasions a moral reason in favour of his selfish desires. Having once resolved that it was desirable for the world to look upon his portrait as painted in his correspondence, the end seemed to him to justify all means. Many circumstances in the course he actually adopted helped to disguise from himself its real character. Curll was to be his publisher—an idea he must have relished exceedingly. The man was a scoundrel, and a pirate, and he had cheated Pope in the publication of the Cromwell correspondence. He was now to be hoist with his own petard. In the marvellous series of

calculations by which Pope contrived to deceive Curll there i the spirit not only of the deliberate impostor, but of th diplomatist with cabbages and turnips. He had the sportin instinct which delights in the successful working of traps an springes. To see so old a fox as Curll walk into the snare se for him, just as Dennis had done in his 'Remarks on Cato and the Dunces after the chapter in the 'Bathos,' gave hin we cannot doubt, great satisfaction; and it is not unreasonabl to believe that the pleasure he took in enacting the part c P. T. diverted some part of his attention from the selfishnes of the main motive by which he was animated. It is indee evident, from expressions in some of his letters, that he di not deny the fact that he had, to some extent, connived a Curll's publication.[1] This plea, of course, will not avail him i the case of the publication of Swift's correspondence, the whol history of which is a melancholy example of the excesses c which he had become capable from the indulgence of his rulin passion of self-love, and of his incorrigible habit of plotting.

In the manipulation of the correspondence itself we trac the hand of the professional composer. Having once determine to make use of his correspondence as a means of revealing h character to the public, he treated both character and corr spondence precisely like a poem which it was important t give to the world in the best possible form. The correspo dence with Wycherley, in its actual state, afforded a strikir picture of the relations existing between an old man of sixty four and a youth of seventeen, but the effect of the comp sition as a whole might be still further pointed and heightene by adding a few ideal touches to strengthen the light an deepen the shadows. Whatever Pope was capable of feelin he thought himself capable of being. He had 'poured out a himself,' so he thought—

"As plain
As downright Shippen or as old Montaigne,"

[1] See, for instance, letter to Fortescue, Vol. IX., p. 133, and letter to Lord Oxford of June 17, 1735.

in his letters to Caryll. When this inner self, however, with all its protestations of effusive benevolence, was to be exhibited to the world, it was necessary that it should shine in a more splendid setting than in letters addressed to a plain Sussex Squire. The character, so Pope doubtless argued the matter with his conscience, was shown in the sentiment: it mattered not whether the sentiment had been in the first place communicated to Caryll or to Addison. He probably did not care to debate with himself the more vital question whether, in view of the relations existing between himself and Addison, he was by the fictitious addresses of his letters doing an injury to the memory of the latter. His immediate object was to clear himself of the charges brought against him by his enemies in respect of the character of Atticus. Convinced that he was himself the aggrieved party, he was bent on establishing his case with the public by facts where possible, by fictions where necessary; and the fictitious letters to Addison were part of the machinery which he considered himself justified in employing for so laudable a purpose.

The foregoing remarks are in no way intended to excuse or extenuate Pope's misdoings. They are meant simply to place before the reader the variety of motives which under the circumstances are likely to have dictated his conduct, so that he may at least be allowed that consideration which all human beings are entitled to receive when they are being judged by their fellows. When Johnson wrote his Life of Pope the full extent of the poet's frauds was not known. Yet even after recent revelations, experience of human nature enables us to place the source of the imposture in the fanaticism of self-love, and in man's infinite capacity of self-deception; and the judgment of Johnson, a man of the sturdiest honesty, may well be weighed by those who are inclined to condemn Pope's character as a whole, on the ground of his dealings in the matter of his correspondence.

"It has been so long said as to be commonly believed, that the true characters of men may be found in their letters, and that he who

writes to his friend lays his heart open before him. But the truth is that such were the friendships of the 'Golden Age,' and are now the friendships only of children. Very few can boast of hearts which they dare lay open to themselves, and of which, by whatever accident exposed, they do not shun a distinct and continued view and certainly what we hide from ourselves, we do not show to our friends. . . . To charge those favourable representations which men give of their own minds with the guilt of hypocritical falsehood would show more severity than knowledge. The writer commonly believes himself. Almost every man's thoughts, while they are general, are right; and most hearts are pure while temptation is away. It is easy to awaken generous sentiments in privacy; to despise death when there is no danger; to glow with benevolence when there is nothing to be given. While such ideas are formed they are felt, and self-love does not suspect the gleam of virtue to be the meteor of fancy."

CHAPTER XIV.

POPE AND THE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION.

Death of Peterborough—Despondency of Swift—The Political Situation—The Third Moral Essay—The Opposition and the Prince of Wales—Introduction of Pope to the Prince—'Epistle to Augustus'—'Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-eight'—Secession of the Opposition from Parliament—Conferences at Pope's Villa—'1740.'

1733—1740.

If anything were needed to excite compassion and indulgence for Pope's abnormal craving for fame, the materials would be found in the glimpses afforded in his correspondence of the state of his health and feelings at this period. He did not exaggerate when in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' he spoke of that 'long disease my life.' His letters tell a tale of constant headaches, perpetual sickness, chronic sleeplessness; and passages here and there in them show how deep was his sense of the contrast between his ideal and his actual self.

"In sincere truth," he writes on one occasion to Lord Bathurst, "I often think myself (it is all I can do) with your lordship; and let me tell you my life in thought and imagination is as much superior to my life in action and reality as the best soul can be to the vilest body. I find the latter grows yearly so much worse and more declining that I believe I shall soon scruple to carry it about to others; it will become almost a carcase, and as unpleasing as those which they say the spirits now and then use for frightening folks. My health is so temporary that, if I pass two days abroad, it is odds but one of them I must be a trouble to any good-natured friend and to his family; and the other, remain dispirited enough to make them no sort of amends by my languid conversation."[1]

He found some relief in perpetual change of scene, and every year was accustomed to make a round of visits to the

[1] Letter of Pope to Lord Bathurst, No. 23, Vol. VIII., p. 359.

seats of his chosen friends, beginning with Lord Cobham a Stowe, whence he would proceed first to General Dormer's Rousham, then to Lord Bathurst's at Cirencester, afterwa to Bath, ending his travels at Bevis Mount, the home of Lo Peterborough, near Southampton, or sometimes with Caryll Ladyholt. In 1735 he paid his last visit to Bevis Mount.

"Lord Peterborough," he writes in November, 1735, "I went take a last leave of at his setting sail for Lisbon. No body can more wasted, no soul can be more alive. Poor Lord Peterborou there is another string lost that would have helped to draw y hither!"

Peterborough died at Lisbon on October 25, 1735. Swi to whom the above was written, was fallen into an even m melancholy condition than Pope. Deafness, giddiness, and sense of desertion weighed heavily upon him, and the tone acute suffering and affection in which he writes to Pope in t following year is tragically pathetic.

"What Horace says, *Singula de nobis anni prædantur*, I feel ev month, at farthest; and by this computation, if I hold out two ye I shall think it a miracle. My comfort is, you began to distinguish confounded early that your acquaintance with distinguished men of kinds was almost as ancient as mine. I mean Wycherley, Rowe, Pr Addison, Parnell, &c., and in spite of your heart you have owned m a contemporary; not to mention Lords Oxford, Bolingbroke, Harco Peterborough. In short, I was the other day recollecting twenty-se great ministers or men of wit and learning who are all dead, and al my acquaintance within twenty years past: neither have I the gr to be sorry that the present times are drawn to the dregs as well as own life. May my friends be happy in this and a better life, bu value not what becomes of posterity when I consider from w monsters they are to spring."[1]

Pope, in his correspondence with the Dean, says, as fitting, comparatively little of his own ailments, but menti with a delicate sympathy his consciousness of a decline in creative powers.

"My understanding, indeed, such as it is, is extended rather th diminished; I see things more in the whole, more consistent, and m

[1] Letter from Swift to Pope of December 2, 1736.

clearly deduced from, and related to, each other. But what I gain on the side of philosophy I lose on the side of poetry; the flowers are gone when the fruits begin to ripen, and the fruits perhaps will never ripen perfectly."[1]

He endeavoured to draw Swift over to England by expressions of his desire to receive and care for him, and by describing the more hopeful state of political life. "Here are a race sprung up," says he, "of young patriots who would animate you." And again—

"I have acquired, without my seeking, a few chance acquaintances of young men, who look rather to the past age than the present, and therefore the future may have some hopes of them. If I love them it is because they honour some of those whom I and the world have lost, or are losing. Two or three of them have distinguished themselves in Parliament, and you will own in a very uncommon manner, when I tell you it is by their asserting of independency and contempt of corruption."[2]

And, in another letter:

"Though one or two of our friends are gone since you saw your native country, there remain a few more who will last so till death, and who, I cannot but hope, have an attractive power to draw you back to a country which cannot be quite sunk or enslaved while such spirits remain. And let me tell you there are a few more of the same spirit, who would awaken all your old ideas, and revive your hopes of her future recovery and virtue."[3]

In these allusions we find the first references to Pope's close connection with the Parliamentary Opposition; and in order to understand the full force of Swift's savage invective against the age, of Pope's praises of the rising patriots in Parliament, and of the satires which he produced at this period of his life, it is necessary to appreciate with some exactness the existing political situation. For many years Walpole had enjoyed something like a monopoly of power. One after another he had seen the statesmen who were qualified to dispute his supremacy—Stanhope, Sunderland, Carteret—removed from his path by death or

[1] Letter from Pope to Swift of March 25, 1736.
[2] Letter from Pope to Swift of December 30, 1736.
[3] Letter from Pope to Swift of March 23, 1736-7.

failure, while latterly, by the retirement of Townshend, his old ally and recent rival, he was left almost alone in the confidence of the King. This position he owed mainly to his own consummate address and sagacity, but partly also to a concourse of favouring circumstances, especially the unfailing support afforded him by the Queen, the distracted state of the Opposition, and the disputes of the European Powers, which prevented a coalition on behalf of the Pretender.

The great end of his policy was the safe establishment on the English throne of the Hanoverian dynasty, which object he sought to secure by extending the commerce of the country and by preserving the peace of Europe. The sagacity of his aim is now generally acknowledged; to him, perhaps more than to any other statesman, England is indebted for the foundations of an imperial greatness, laid in the midst of unsettlement and revolution. But the means which he was forced to adopt in the execution of his policy show the difficulties with which he was beset. Abroad he preserved the peace of Europe and extended the commerce of the country by shifting his alliances just as the expediency of the moment seemed to dictate. At home he was obliged to work as the servant of Sovereigns who had but small sympathy with purely English interests, and by means of a Party which had no hold on the public imagination. To secure the stability of his Ministry he had recourse to an unblushing system of bribery, both in the House of Commons and in the electorate, and he employed without hesitation, lo and venal writers to influence public opinion. Hence h conduct of foreign affairs, though distinguished by extrem adroitness, seemed wanting in principle, while his manage ment of Parliament was open to the charge of cynicism The nation settled down quietly under the House of Brun wick, but without any love for its Sovereigns; it enjoyed th fruits of liberty, but was uneasy at the sight of a wide-sprea corruption; it felt the advantage of European peace, but wa angry that it appeared to be purchased with dishonour.

All these sources of weakness were noted and utilised b

Walpole's most able adversary. Though Bolingbroke was indebted to the Minister for his amnesty, he hated him because he had failed to reinstate him in his political privileges, and he was passionately desirous to drive him from office. Ever since his return to England this had been the object of his intrigues. With George I. he had failed completely. The high hopes which the Opposition had entertained on the accession of George II. had been disappointed, partly by the address of Walpole, supported by the influence of the Queen, and partly through their own mistake in believing that the King's confidence could be secured through his mistress, Lady Suffolk. Bolingbroke now saw that the only way in which Walpole could be overthrown was by uniting against him the various sections of the Opposition in Parliament, and by arousing a hostile opinion in the electorate. He laid his plans in both these directions with his usual ability. Through his influence with Sir William Wyndham, the leader of the Tories, he brought about a co-operation between that party and the discontented Whigs, led by Pulteney, Sandys, and Sir John Barnard, and he supported the action of this Parliamentary coalition by weekly attacks on the Ministry in the 'Craftsman.'

This paper was started on the 5th of December, 1726, the year following the Treaty of Hanover. In it Bolingbroke, under the signature of Caleb D'Anvers, with the occasional assistance of Pulteney, dressed in the most brilliant colours of wit, eloquence, and reasoning, all the arguments calculated to injure Walpole in the opinion of the country. His purpose was to represent the Minister as an unscrupulous and avaricious adventurer, bent on raising himself to absolute power by means of constitutional forms. Every action of the Government was interpreted in the 'Craftsman' in the light of this hypothesis. Walpole himself was compared week after week to the various corrupt Court favourites in Roman and English history. His foreign policy was assailed, now for its servile subordination of English to

Hanoverian interests, now for the sacrifice of an old ally like the Emperor to the ambitious Bourbons, now for the tame surrender of the rights of British commerce to the encroachments of Spain. In domestic affairs Mr. D'Anvers dwelt upon the Minister's fondness for Standing Armies and a National Debt; his intimate relations with the dishonest stock-jobbing interest; his favour of monopolists; his cynical employment of all the arts of bribery and corruption; all which conduct, it was argued, was the infallible sign of a dark conspiracy against the liberties of the country. In short, the method of Bolingbroke in the 'Craftsman' may be said to have furnished the model on which all unscrupulous Oppositions have since been careful to form their tactics.

The general style of his rhetoric may be illustrated by a few sentences taken from the Preface to the collected papers published in 1731.

"We thought this a proper season to rise up in defence of our national interests, and to animate our countrymen with a becoming zeal on such a melancholy occasion. The supineness and indolence which we observed to reign amongst a great part of them added spurs to our design, and quickened us in the prosecution of it. We judged it necessary to awake them from that lethargy which they had suffered to creep upon them, and to revive that ancient spirit which is the Palladium of our Constitution."

Sentiment and language of this kind were extremely congenial to the taste of Pope. He was at this period completely under the intellectual influence of Bolingbroke, from whom he imbibed with eagerness political principles the real factiousness of which was disguised by the sounding phrases of philosophy. At the same time he undoubtedly enjoyed the atmosphere of mystery and intrigue by which he found himself surrounded. His villa at Twickenham was well situated to catch all the scandal that floated from the three Royal residences of Kew, Richmond, and Hampton Court.

"I am not, I own," he writes to Gay, "altogether so divested of terrene matter, not altogether so spiritualized, as to be worthy of admission to your depths of retirement and contentment. I am tugged

back to the world and its regards too often; and no wonder, when my retreat is but ten miles from the capital. I am within ear-shot of reports, within the vortex of lies and censures." [1]

The effects of this curious blending of the spirit of the philosopher and the political partizan are first seen in the 'Epistle to Bathurst,' which, though superficially a Moral Essay on the proper Use of Riches, is, in fact, a bitter satire on the abuse of them by the monied interest, an important bulwark of Walpole's power. The apparently common-place balancing of the advantages and evils of a currency with which the Epistle opens, veils poignant sarcasms on the corruption of this class of the community. Among the persons specially selected as examples of the abuse of Riches are representatives of the Charitable Corporation, the Commission of the forfeited Derwentwater Estates, and the South Sea Company, all associated in the public mind with fraudulent dealings, which Walpole, against the opinion of his own friends, had prevented the House of Commons from investigating. Here and there the satire contains an ironic allusion to Walpole himself, as in the wizard's prophecy of the South Sea Bubble:

> "At length Corruption, like a general flood,
> (So long by watchful Ministers withstood)
> Shall deluge all."

And again in the couplet:

> "Ask you why Phryne the whole auction buys
> Phryne foresees a general excise."

To which Pope, in 1735, added the following note: "Many people about the year 1733 had a conceit that such a thing was intended, of which it is not improbable this lady might have some intimation." Couplet and note are both extremely interesting examples of Pope's minute satiric method. The poem was written in *1732*. In that year Walpole had imposed an excise duty on salt, which the Opposition loudly

[1] Letter from Pope to Gay of September 11, 1730.

declared was the prelude to a scheme of General Excise. In 1733 a Bill was introduced providing for the commutation of the Customs Duties on Wine and Tobacco into Excise Duties. This measure, though extremely reasonable, both as a relief to the landed interest, and as a preventive to frauds on the revenue, was at once declared by Bolingbroke and Pulteney to be a fulfilment of their predictions as to Walpole's conspiracy against liberty; and after hot debates in the Commons it was at last dropped by the Minister. By Phryne Pope meant Mary Skerrett, the mistress of Walpole, who, the poet insinuates, was enabled to enrich herself by receiving early political information. The note added to the verses in 173- was intended to keep alive the recollection of a disaster, the most serious that Walpole had yet suffered, and of a scandalous connection which injured him in public esteem.

The course of events helped to confirm Pope in his antagonism to the King and his Minister. Faulty tactics deprived the Opposition of the advantage they had gained by the defeat of the Excise Scheme. Their ranks had been swelled by a number of powerful Whigs—amongst them Pope's friends, Burlington, Cobham, Chesterfield, and Marchmont,—who had been dismissed from their appointments for having opposed the Bill. Unduly elated by his success, Bolingbroke now urged Wyndham, the leader of the Tories, to insist that the Opposition should bring forward a motion for the repeal of the Septennial Act. The anti-Ministerial Whigs, some of whom had themselves been responsible for that measure, naturally entered with reluctance upon a course which exposed them to the charge of flagrant inconsistency. In the course of the debate Wyndham made a violent attack upon Walpole, drawing a portrait of an imaginary Minister, raising himself by sacrificing the liberties of his country, and of an imaginary King, whom he described as "unacquainted with the inclinations and interests of his people, weak and hurried away by unbounded ambition and insatiable avarice."[1] Walpole

[1] Coxe's 'Walpole,' i. 419.

seized the opportunity to retort with crushing effect upon Bolingbroke.

"Let us suppose," he said, "in this or some other unfortunate country, an anti-minister, who thinks himself a person of so great and extensive parts, that he looks upon himself as the only person in the kingdom capable to conduct the public affairs of the nation, and therefore christening every other gentleman who has the honour to be employed in the administration by the name of blunderer. Suppose this fine gentleman lucky enough to have gained over to his party some persons really of fine parts, of ancient families, and of great fortunes, and others of desperate views, arising from disappointed and malicious hearts; all these gentlemen with respect to their political behaviour moved by him, and by him solely; all they say either in private or public, being only a repetition of the words he has put into their mouths, and a spitting out of the venom he has infused into them; and yet we may suppose this leader not really liked by any of those who so blindly follow him, and hated by all the rest of mankind."[1]

The adroitness of this spirited retort carried the House, already disgusted with the indecency of Wyndham's allusion to the King, by storm. Walpole's triumph was complete. Bolingbroke felt acutely the failure of his attack. Conscious that he was regarded by the members of the regular Opposition as a source of embarrassment rather than of help, he withdrew himself from politics, and, being deeply in debt, retired to France in the winter of 1735.

"I am still," he writes to Wyndham on November 29, 1735, "the same proscribed man, surrounded with difficulties, and unable to take any share in the service, but that which I have taken hitherto, and which I think you would not persuade me to take in the present state of things. My part is over, and he who remains on the stage after his part is over deserves to be hissed off."[2]

Thus Pope lost his "guide, philosopher, and friend." But the seed which Bolingbroke had sown in the 'Craftsman' was not unfruitful. The younger members of the Opposition, headed by Lyttelton, Pitt, and the Grenvilles, began to translate his philosophical phrases into a definite and practical policy. Uncorrupt themselves, these young men looked with real indignation on Walpole's methods of Parliamentary

[1] Coxe's 'Walpole, i. 420. [2] Coxe's 'Walpole,' i. 427.

management, and attacked, as unworthy of the greatness of England, the ingenious pettiness of the shifts by which he preserved the peace of Europe. The 'patriotic' sentiment with which they opposed him already foreshadowed the principles of Chatham's Ministry.

Walpole himself affected to treat their policy with contempt. He spoke of them as 'the boys;' and depreciated their invectives as mere declamation. Yet he was conscious that their eloquence exercised a real influence on public opinion, already inflamed against his government. His position had been seriously weakened by his defeat on the Excise Bill, and he soon found himself involved in still greater embarrassment through the internal disputes in the Royal Family.

Frederick, Prince of Wales, was born in 1707, and till his twenty-first year had been educated in Hanover. He had fallen romantically in love with the daughter of the King of Prussia, but his father had refused his sanction to the marriage. The Prince nevertheless persevered, and had even made arrangements to be married secretly to the Princess, when he was peremptorily summoned to England by the King. He at once obeyed, but, as was natural under the circumstances, he associated with the leaders of the Opposition, and especially with Bolingbroke, who seems to have fascinated him with his eloquence. Finding him ardent and impressionable, the latter soon perceived that he might serve as a stumbling-block to Walpole. It was after the arrival of the Prince in England in 1728 that Bolingbroke began to ventilate his idea of a 'Patriot King.' As it was the contention of the Opposition that George II. was the puppet of a corrupt Minister, who managed his Sovereign in the interest of his party and of himself, Bolingbroke sought to persuade the people, through the 'Craftsman,' that the true ideal of the Constitution was an union of all moderate subjects under a patriotic Sovereign, who should be left at full liberty to choose the best and ablest men as his Ministers. He hinted, at the

same time, not obscurely, that his ideal might be hereafter realised in the person of the present Prince of Wales.

Although, with a dynasty deriving its title from Parliament, and with a powerful aristocracy monopolising the great offices of the State, this scheme could never have been put into practice, it was by no means so visionary as some writers have represented it. In the first place it was less inconsistent with the theory of the English Constitution than was the Whig doctrine of government by family influence. James II. had no doubt pushed the prerogative to a point incompatible with liberty; but William III. had endeavoured to govern by means of a coalition of moderate men; and both Chatham and Pitt in later times, to some extent adopted the same principle, which indeed has not been lost sight of even by the statesmen of a more democratic age. Again, the idea of a Patriot King was remarkably effective as an instrument of Opposition. The King himself was unpopular; his health was bad; to intriguing statesmen there were, therefore, strong inducements to exalt the character of an Heir Apparent, in whom the people were interested, and who might soon be in a position of actual sovereignty. The younger and more enthusiastic portion of the Opposition probably believed sincerely in the feasibility of the principles they professed. The Prince was young and seemed capable of generous sentiments; his manners were pleasing; he showed some taste for art and letters, and a preference for English over merely Hanoverian interests. The rising Whigs, of whom Lyttelton, the chief representative, was deep in the confidence of the Prince of Wales, hoped that the character of the latter would develop according to Bolingbroke's ideal; and they lost no opportunity of introducing to his notice the leading writers of the day, in the belief that his mind would be strengthened in their company, and that he would acquire popularity as a patron of literature. In this manner Thomson, Mallet, Glover, and Brooke were brought within the innermost anti-Ministerial circle. The literary fruits of the association may be seen in works like 'Leonidas,' 'Gustavus

Vasa,' and 'Alfred,' all of which are strongly coloured w
Bolingbroke's doctrines. The whole of the connection, litera
and political, looked, as Pope described them in his letter
Swift, 'rather to the past than to the present;' in other wo
they professed the principles of the Whigs at the time of t
Revolution.

Pope himself was naturally the man of letters whose c
operation this party were most anxious to secure. It may
presumed that it was either through the instance of Lyttelt
or Bolingbroke that the Prince was urged to distinguish h
with particular honours. The first notice of their intercour
is contained in a letter from the poet to Bathurst of October
1735.

"I was three days since," he writes, "surprised by a favour of h
royal highness, an unexpected visit of four or five hours. I ought n
to omit telling you that on sight of your picture he spoke in just ter
of you, and expressed great personal affection; I thought so very
markably that I found it the best topic for me to make my court
him."

In the following year the Prince married the Princ
Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, and the Opposition resolved to sei
the opportunity for executing a project which had long be
a favourite with Bolingbroke. George II., personally clo
and avaricious, had refused to make his son an allowance
more than half the sum which he himself, when Prince
Wales, had received from his father with a smaller Civil Li
The Prince's income of less than £60,000 being insufficient
cover his expenses, the leaders of the Opposition determin
to bring the pressure of Parliament to bear upon the Kin
Their measures were concerted in the winter of 1736 at Bat
of which city the Prince was then presented with the freedo
and where at the same time he received from Pope a present
one of the puppies of his dog Bounce.[1] In January, 1737, t
King, whose unpopularity had of late much increased in co
sequence of his frequent absences from England, returned fro

[1] Letter from Lyttelton to Pope of December 22, 1736.

Hanover to be confronted almost immediately with Pulteney's motion requesting him to increase the allowance of the Prince to £100,000.

The motion was defeated in the Commons on February 22nd, but only after the quarrels in the Royal Family had been made indecently public, and the general disapproval of the King's behaviour to his son fully manifested. On the next day the Lords also rejected the motion, and while every one was talking of the scandal, Pope, on the 6th of March, registered at Stationers' Hall the most brilliant and incisive of his Imitations of Horace, the 'Epistle to Augustus.' In no other poem of the series are his parallels so apt, his criticisms so just, or his turns of irony so subtle and humorous.

"The reflections of Horace," says he, in his Advertisement, "and the judgments passed in his 'Epistle to Augustus,' seemed so seasonable to the present time that I could not help applying them to the use of my own country. The author thought them considerable enough to address them to his prince, whom he paints with all the great and good qualities of a monarch upon whom the Romans depended for the increase of an absolute empire; but to make the poem entirely English, I was willing to add one or two of those which contribute to the happiness of a free people, and are more consistent with the welfare of our neighbours."

The King's preference for Hanover over England, his contempt for literature, the timid foreign policy and subservience of his Minister to Spain, the corrupt arts which Walpole employed, and his supposed schemes of establishing a despotic form of government, are all covertly aimed at under the compliments with which the satire opens:

"While you, great patron of mankind, sustain
The balanced world, and open all the main;
Your country, chief, in arms abroad defend,
At home with morals, arts, and laws amend;
How shall the muse, from such a monarch, steal
An hour, and not defraud the public weal?

* * *

To thee the world its present homage pays,
The harvest early, but mature the praise:
Great friend of liberty! in Kings a name
Above all Greek, above all Roman fame;

Whose word is truth as sacred and revered
As Heaven's own oracles from altars heard.
Wonder of kings! like whom to mortal eyes[1]
None e'er has risen, and none e'er shall rise."

The sudden change of key by which, at the close of the Epistle, he shows his real meaning is a masterpiece of art:

"Oh could I mount on the Mæonian wing,
Your arms, your action, your repose to sing!
What seas you traversed, and what fields you fought,
Your country's peace, how oft, how dearly bought!
How barb'rous rage subsided at your word,
And nations wondered while they dropped the sword!
How when you nodded, o'er the land and deep
Peace stole her wing, and wrapped the world in sleep;
Till earth's extremes your mediation own,
And Asia's tyrants tremble at your throne.
But verse, alas! your Majesty disdains,
And I'm not used to panegyric strains:
The zeal of fools offends at any time,
But most of all the zeal of fools in rhyme.
Besides, a fate attends on all I write,
That when I aim at praise they say I bite."

The Court was extremely angry at the ridicule, and it is said that it was actually in contemplation to prosecute the poet for the lines in reference to Wood's halfpence:

"Let Ireland tell how wit upheld her cause,
Her trade supported, and supplied her laws;
And leave on Swift this grateful verse engraved,
'The rights a Court attacked, a poet saved.'"

Swift, to whom the poem was apparently sent in MS. more than a year before it was published, was greatly pleased with the compliment.

"I heartily thank you," he writes to Pope on February 9, 1736, "for those lines translated *Singula de nobis anni*, &c. You have put them in a strong and admirable light; but, however, I am so partial as to be more delighted with those which are to do me the greatest honour I shall ever receive from posterity, and will outweigh the malignity of ten thousand enemies."

The continuance of the breach in the Royal Family, which

[1] Probably referring to George II.'s fraudulent suppression of his father's will.

was made complete by the conduct of the Prince in removing his wife from Hampton Court on the eve of her *accouchement*, added greatly to the difficulties of Walpole's position. Indeed, throughout the year 1737 fortune continued to frown upon him. The King and the Queen were dissatisfied with his conduct of the debate on Pulteney's motion. The unscrupulous course he took in defeating Barnard's proposals for the reduction of the interest on the National Debt disgusted all who were not blinded by party passion: the Porteous Bill cost him the allegiance of the Duke of Argyll, hitherto one of his steady supporters; the Licensing Bill, for placing the theatres under the authority of the Lord Chamberlain, was naturally represented as another blow at the liberties of the nation. On their side the Opposition pressed their advantage with zeal and ability, making the most of the rhetorical opportunities which Walpole's corrupt methods of government afforded them, and using the popularity of the Prince to embroil the political situation. On one occasion Lord Hervey tells us that the latter went to see a performance of 'Cato,' being loudly applauded at his entry, and, "where Cato says these words—"*When vice prevails and impious men bear sway, The post of honour is a private station*"—there was another loud huzza, with a great clap, in the latter part of which applause the Prince himself joined, in the face of the whole audience."[1]

The Opposition, however, were not without their embarrassments. Two of their most prominent leaders, Pulteney and Carteret, had entered with reluctance into the plan of setting the Prince against his family, and were inclined to make their peace with the Court. But while they were finessing in a manner that was by no means agreeable to Walpole, the latter was overwhelmed with what seemed a final disaster. On the 20th of November the Queen, who had supported him so long and so steadily, who had understood better than any other person the solid merits of his

[1] Lord Hervey's Memoirs (1884), vol. iii. 270.

character and his policy, died, after a painful illness. It well known that he was in small favour with the Princess whether the King, whom he had so often opposed, would submit to his advice now that he was deprived of his chally, was doubtful. Added to these personal difficulties, had to encounter the outcry raised against his policy in the beginning of 1738, in consequence of his supposed subservience to the Court of Spain.

While the political atmosphere was charged with all this electricity, Pope published, in May and July of this year, the two Dialogues, originally entitled 'Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-Eight,' and now known as the 'Epilogue to the Satires;' brilliant and powerful compositions, which reflect with the greatest vividness the character of the poet as well as of his times. They are professedly an apology for his use of personality in satire, and the following passage contains a protestation of integrity as earnest and impassioned as the lines previously cited from the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot:'

> "O sacred weapon! left for truth's defence,
> Sole dread of folly, vice, and insolence!
> To all but heaven-directed hands denied,
> The Muse may give thee, but the gods must guide;
> Reverent I touch thee, but with honest zeal,
> To rouse the watchmen of the public weal,
> To virtue's work provoke the tardy hall,
> And goad the prelate slumbering in his stall.
> Ye tinsel insects! whom a Court maintains,
> That counts your beauties only by your stains,
> Spin all your cobwebs o'er the eye of day!
> The Muse's wing shall brush you all away:
> All his Grace preaches, all his lordship sings,
> All that makes saints of queens, and gods of kings:
> All, all but truth, drops still-born from the press,
> Like the last Gazette, or the last address."

This seems to be the utterance of a moralist pure and simple, and some of Pope's biographers, like Roscoe, who make it their business to find external evidence in support of whatever he professes about himself, have pointed to his friend-

ships both with Whigs and Tories, as proof of the impartiality of his mind and of the literal truth of his satire. It is scarcely necessary to warn any reader of these pages of the delusive character of such views. It is true, no doubt, that in his early days, while he had yet to make his fortune, Pope prudently kept himself clear from all political entanglements. But when his independence and position were once assured, and he was free to listen to Bolingbroke's eloquence, his attitude altered completely. An attentive reader of the Epilogue will see that, with the exception of Henry Pelham, no contemporary Whig is complimented and no Bishop praised, unless he is either in some way associated with the party of the Prince of Wales, or, for the moment at least, dissociated from the Court. The object of the satire is evidently to paint the corruption of the times in the darkest colours, and to impute the entire responsibility to the Government. The King, the late Queen, and the Court party in the House of Lords, are all bitterly satirised, though in terms of such skilful ambiguity as always to admit of a more favourable interpretation.

Irony, so conspicuous a feature in the 'Epistle to Augustus,' is here carried to a climax of subtlety and polish. Walpole is aimed at repeatedly in veiled allusions. His 'horse-laugh, if you please at honesty,' his cynical opinion of mankind, his resemblance to wicked Ministers like Wolsey and Sejanus, the universal corruption encouraged by his system, and painted by the poet in the glowing image of the Triumph of Vice, are duly exposed to the public censure. At the same time the satire is mitigated, whenever Walpole's name is actually mentioned, with graceful compliments, due to the Minister for the service he had done the poet in procuring for his friend Southcote an abbacy in France.

> "Go see Sir Robert! P. See Sir Robert!—hum—
> And never laugh—for all my life to come?
> Seen him I have, but in his happier hour
> Of social pleasure, ill-exchanged for power;
> Seen him uncumbered with a venal tribe,
> Smile without art, and win without a bribe."

In another place Pope affects to place Walpole among his friends, but artfully calls attention to his conjugal shortcomings:

> "Spirit of Arnall! aid me while I lie.
> Cobham's a coward, Polwarth is a slave,
> And Lyttelton a dark designing knave;
> St. John has ever been a wealthy fool—
> But, let me add, Sir Robert's mighty dull,
> Has never made a friend in private life,
> And was, besides, a tyrant to his wife."

The King, like his Minister, is made to feel the edge of this concealed irony:

> "Is it for Bond and Peter (paltry things)
> To pay their debts, or keep their faith *like kings?*"

Pope alludes to the suppression of George I.'s will by his son and successor, whereby several of his legatees were defrauded of their bequests. In the same vein is the famous passage on the Queen's death, which shows how minutely the poet was informed of all that passed in the Royal sick-room:

> "Or teach the melancholy muse to mourn,
> Hang the sad verse on Carolina's urn,
> And hail her passage to the realms of rest,
> All parts performed, and *all* her children blessed!"

The Queen was reported to have declined to receive the Sacrament in her illness, and it is now known that, in spite of official contradiction, Pope was quite correct in representing her as refusing her forgiveness to the Prince of Wales.[1]

The doubtful members of the Opposition were not allowed to escape:

> "But, faith, your very friends will soon be sore;
> Patriots there are who wish you'd jest no more—"

says the interlocutor in the first dialogue, in obvious allusion to the lukewarm conduct in opposition of Pulteney and

[1] Lord Hervey's 'Memoirs of the Reign of George II.' (1884), vol. iii. 335.

Carteret. On the other hand, even the appearance of defection from the Court was sufficient to exalt the waverer in the opinion of the poet. The Duke of Argyll, long a warm supporter of Walpole, had been alienated by the Porteous Bill, and seemed to lean to the Opposition. Including him among the 'worthy men' whom the Court were desirous to remove, Pope describes him:

> "Argyll, the State's whole thunder born to wield,
> And shake alike the senate and the field."

Nor did he restrict his favour to 'worthy men.' In the first edition of the satire there was a couplet—

> "Sir George of some slight gallantries suspect,
> In reverend S——n note a small neglect."

'Sir George' was Sir George Oxenden, an infamous debauchee, whom Lord Hervey characterises as the Clodius of the time;[1] 'S——n' was Sir Robert Sutton, a prominent member of the fraudulent Charitable Corporation. The couplet was afterwards altered, and now runs as follows:

> "In Sappho touch the failings of the sex,
> In reverend Bishops note some small neglects."

The allusion in the second line in the first edition was removed at the request of Warburton, who was under obligations to Sutton and professed a belief in his innocence; but it was not pretended that Sir George had amended his life. Since the publication of 'Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-Eight,' however, he had changed his party, and now voted in the interest of the Prince of Wales! These instances show very plainly that, when Pope says, addressing Satire—

> "Reverent I touch thee, but with honest zeal,
> To rouse the watchmen of the public weal,"

he regards the public welfare from a purely personal and

[1] Lord Hervey's 'Memoirs of the Reign of George II.' (1884), vol. iii. 148.

party point of view. When, therefore, he breaks into his really sublime invective against the prevailing Vice of the age and cries out,—

> "See thronging millions to the pagod run,
> And offer country, parent, wife, or son!
> Hera her black trumpet through the land proclaim,
> That NOT TO BE CORRUPTED IS THE SHAME.
> In soldier, churchman, patriot, man in power,
> 'Tis avarice all, ambition is no more!
> See all our nobles begging to be slaves,
> See all our fools aspiring to be knaves—"

we must take this as a poetical way of saying that he saw many adventurers, with fortunes made in the East Indies, buying boroughs, in the hope of making a profitable bargain with the Minister; some of the Bishops, like Sherlock and Hoadley, taking an active part in secular politics; and certain noblemen, like the Duke of Kent, ready to give an unflinching support to the Court policy in the lively expectation of the Garter. No moralist could defend abuses probably inseparable from oligarchical government, and which well deserved the poet's satire; if, however, Pope had not imbibed the spirit of the 'Craftsman,' he would scarcely have concluded them to be a symptom that the country as a whole was afflicted with mortal disease. As it was, party spirit, mingled with self-love, produced in him a strange exaltation:

> "Yet may this verse (if such a verse remain)
> Show there was one who held it in disdain:"

while the unmistakable passion of the following lines indicates that a fanatical conviction of his own virtue, with the proud sense of poetical power, made his political belief a good deal more genuine than that of the 'old Parliamentary hands' who had invented the Opposition rhetoric.

> "Ask you what provocation I have had?
> The strong antipathy of good to bad.
> When truth or virtue an affront endures,
> The affront is mine, my friend, and should be yours;

Mine, as a foe professed to false pretence,
Who think a coxcomb's honour like his sense;
Mine, as a friend to every worthy mind;
And mine, as man, who feel for all mankind.
F. You're strangely proud.
P. So proud, I am no slave;
So impudent I own myself no knave:
So odd, my country's ruin makes me grave.
Yes, I am proud; I must be proud to see
Men not afraid of God, afraid of me:
Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,
Yet touched and shamed by ridicule alone!"

The spirit and animation of this poem are the measure of the ardent hopes of a still united Opposition. Popular exasperation against Walpole, increasing through the year 1738, culminated in the Convention by which he sought to settle the national dispute with Spain; and his adversaries taking advantage of the general sentiment prepared, in February, 1739, for a grand attack. The Minister anticipated them by making his brother Horace move an amendment to their motion, thanking the King for the Convention. After a hot debate the amendment was carried by a small majority. Thereupon the Opposition carried out a scheme which had long been a favourite with Bolingbroke. Wyndham rose in his place, and declaring that he could no longer share the responsibility for the acts of such an assembly, left the House, followed by the majority of the anti-Ministerial party.

Outside the House the Opposition continued to plot the downfall of Walpole. Pope's villa was chosen as the scene of their counsels. He has himself described the gathering in his

"Egerian grot,
Where nobly pensive St. John sate and thought;
Where *British* sighs from dying Wyndham stole,
And the bright flame was shot from Marchmont's soul."

The Prince and Princess of Wales (the latter, we may suppose, in the character of 'Egeria'), attended these meetings and freely delivered their opinions. But they were no longer at the head of a united party. The secession from Parlia-

ment had plainly revealed the dissensions in the various sections of the Opposition, and the correspondence between Pope and Lyttelton faithfully reflects the despondency which had in consequence fallen upon the leaders. One party among the anti-Walpolian Whigs, headed by Pulteney and Carteret, had, as has been already said, all along disapproved of setting up the Prince against his father. Another section, including Lyttelton and all the younger members of the Opposition, were for carrying this policy still further, and were prepared to urge the separation of Hanover from England. Others, like Lord Cornbury, disgusted with the factiousness of the party, had refused to leave the House of Commons; while Shippen, the leader of the Jacobites, openly professed his indifference as to the issue of a struggle which involved nothing but a change of Ministry.

A letter from the enthusiastic Lyttelton to Pope speaks the sentiments of those who were animated with the idea of a 'Patriot King.' After exhorting the poet to use his great influence over the mind of the Prince, Lyttelton continues:

"If the sacred fire, which by you and other honest men has been kindled in his mind, can be preserved, we may yet be safe. But if it go out it is a presage of ruin and we must be lost. For the age is far too corrupted to reform itself; it must be done by those upon or near the throne or not at all. They must restore what we ourselves have given up; they must save us from our own vices and follies; they must bring back the taste of honesty, and the sense of honour, which the *fashion of knavery* has almost destroyed."[1]

Pope, in his reply, informs Lyttelton of the line of policy which, after one of the Grotto conferences, Sir William Wyndham is disposed to adopt:

"He is fully persuaded that the part taken by his R. H. opens an opportunity of rectifying these errors by retrieving and preventing these mischiefs; but he thinks his R. H. should exert his whole influence first to prepare, and then to back the new measure: who the

[1] Letter from Lyttelton to Pope of October 25, 1739.

moment it takes place will be the head of the party, and those two persons [*i.e.*, Pulteney and Carteret] cease so to be at that instant.

"That it is proper to continue to live with them, however, in all the same terms of friendly intercourse, and with the same appearance of intimacy, may so strengthen the plea to it by showing how extremely they have been trusted, deferred to, and comply'd with.

"That all persons (many of which there certainly are) as may be determined to join in the pursuit of the original measures of the Opposition, should be determined by all sorts of private application (whether Whigs or Tories), but by no means apply'd to in the collective body, or too generally, but in separate conversations and arguments.

"That upon every important occasion the things resolv'd upon shall be pushed by the persons in this secret, how much soever the others may hang off, which will reduce these to the dilemma of joyning with the Court or of following their friends with no good grace."[1]

The over-cleverness of these schemes, so characteristic of all Bolingbroke's strategy, met with no success, and accordingly, though Walpole's unpopularity increased daily, and the day of his downfall approached, the utterances of the Prince of Wales' followers breathe nothing but anger and disappointment. Their feelings are reflected in the curious fragment by Pope entitled '1740,' where all sections, and almost every member, of the Opposition, are impartially abused. The pertinacity with which the school of Bolingbroke clung to their favourite idea is illustrated in a very interesting manner by the concluding lines of this poem:

"Alas! on one alone our all relies,
Let him be honest, and he must be wise;
Let him no trifler from his [father's] school,
Nor like his [father's father] still a [fool]
Be but a man! unministered, alone,
And fire at once the senate and the throne;
Esteem the public love his best supply,
A [king's] true glory his integrity;
Rich *with* his [Britain] *in* his [Britain] strong,
Affect no conquest, but endure no wrong.
Whatever his religion or his blood,
His public virtue make his title good.
Europe's just balance and our own may stand,
And one man's honesty redeem the land."

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[1] Letter from Pope to Lyttelton, No. 7, Vol. IX., p. 179.

wishes. While the Queen lived he had received from her a small yearly pension in return for the birthday odes which he wrote in her honour. After her death he found himself without any means of subsistence. His friends clubbed together to allow him, on certain conditions, fifty pounds a year, twenty of which came from Pope. Savage resented the conditions, and expected that the pension would be paid him whether he complied with them or not. One by one his friends discontinued their subscriptions, but Pope, in spite of his petulance, remained constant in his friendship. He used his interest on his behalf with his former patrons; bore patiently with his childish ill-humour, and continued to pay him regularly the sum he had promised, until, in 1743, he believed he had evidence that Savage had returned his kindness with gross ingratitude. On making this discovery he wrote to him the second of the two letters that are preserved, informing him that he must henceforth leave him to his own resources.[1]

Still more interesting is the story of his connection with Johnson. On the same day that Pope published the First Dialogue of 'Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-Eight' Johnson, then an unknown writer, brought out his 'London,' which was received by the public with even more favour than Pope's satire. Pope himself was much interested in the poem. He showed no jealousy, but commissioned the younger Richardson to find out what was known of the author. When Richardson, after enquiry, informed him that he was an obscure man, Pope observed, 'He will soon be *déterré*.'[2] He proceeded to make further investigations himself, and finding that Johnson was a strong opponent of Walpole, and that he suffered from St. Vitus's Dance, he wrote to Lord Gower in his behalf, but without success. When Johnson afterwards heard of this application he showed a strong desire to see the note in

[1] Letter from Pope to Savage, Vol. X., p. 102.

[2] Boswell's 'Life of Johnson', p. 36 (Croker's edition).

which Pope recorded it, and observed, "Who would not be proud to have such a man as Pope so solicitous in enquiring about him?"[1]

Had he known earlier of Pope's efforts to help him, it is possible that he might have been less eager to prosecute some translations which about this period caused the poet considerable anxiety. Johnson was himself engaged with Crousaz' Commentary on the Abbé du Resnel's translation of the 'Essay on Man,' but he temporarily abandoned it in deference to the opinion of his publisher, Cave. "I think, however," he wrote to the latter in September, 1738, "the 'Examen' should be pushed forward with the utmost expedition. Thus 'This day, &c., an Examen of Mr. Pope's Essay, &c.; containing a succinct Account of the Philosophy of Mr. Leibnitz on the System of the Fatalists with a Confutation of their Opinions, and an Illustration of the Doctrine of Free Will' (with what else you think proper)."[2] This translation, the work of Johnson's friend, Miss Elizabeth Carter, served to popularize the objections to the 'Essay on Man' which, even in the French original, had attracted much attention. As has been already said, when the poem first made its appearance, Pope's apprehension had chiefly been, that the author might be exposed to the charge of Deism. Such, however, was the confusion of religious thought in England in George the Second's reign, that the Essay, although its poetical qualities at once roused the public interest, escaped condemnation on the charge of heresy, and it was left to a foreigner to point out the logical consequences of the principles on which it was based.

In 1737 Jean Pierre de Crousaz, Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy in the University of Lausanne, having read the poem in the French translation of the Abbé du Resnel, showed that its reasoning led directly to fatalistic conclusions destructive of the foundations of Natural Religion. The

[1] Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,' pp. 37, 41 (Croker's edition).

[2] Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,' p. 39 (Croker's edition).

method of his Examination was somewhat clumsy. It to the form of a letter to a gentleman in which the wri ironically professed his belief that Pope had purposely e bodied in his Essay the doctrines of Leibnitz in order to ill trate his own leading principle, the groundlessness of hum pride. Not having sufficient art to sustain his irony, Crou soon let it be seen that he knew the poet to be in earnest, a that his own arguments were intended to be a systema confutation of the philosophy of the 'Essay.' Pope w greatly distressed. He was innocent of the intentions wh Crousaz imputed to him. Caught by the rhetoric of Boli broke, he had believed the system which his friend unfol to be a valid argument in defence of Natural Religion a Morality. Bolingbroke himself, who, whether from liter vanity or real fanaticism, hoped that his philosophy mi supersede Christianity, nevertheless professed to put it fo as an antidote to atheism.

"The fourth Epistle," he writes to Swift on August 2, 1731, [Pope] is now intent upon. It is a noble subject. He pleads the c of God, I use Seneca's expression, against that famous charge w atheists in all ages have brought against the supposed unequal dis sation of Providence,—a charge which I cannot heartily forgive divines for admitting. You admit it indeed for an extreme good pose, and you build on this admission the necessity of a future state rewards and punishments. But what if you should find that t future state will not account, in opposition to the atheist, for G justice in the present state which you give up? Would it not h been better to defend God's justice in this world against these dar men, by irrefragable reasons, and to have rested the proof of the ot point on revelation?"

Part of the reasoning on which Bolingbroke based l doctrines, and which he doubtless communicated to Pope if it were a speculation of his own, was borrowed from t system of Leibnitz. Pope, ignorant of philosophy, and delighted to find himself in possession of materials which l themselves so readily to his poetical style, did not care, or perhaps unable, to push the principles which he versified their logical conclusion. The 'Examen' of Crousaz sudde

revealed to him that while he supposed himself to have been building a bulwark for religion, he had been unconsciously undermining its base. His relief may therefore be imagined, when a champion stepped forward, and undertook to prove that the Essay was not only philosophic but orthodox.

William Warburton was ten years younger than Pope. In his early youth he had been bred to the law, but a love of miscellaneous reading diverted him from that profession to the Church, and at the age of twenty-three he was ordained deacon. His early studies, however, had a considerable influence on his character, and though most of his voluminous writings were of a theological nature, they are invariably animated by the spirit of the Old Bailey. He had a passion for making out a paradoxical case. He brought himself into notice in 1736 by a new theory of the relationship between Church and State. In 1738 he startled the religious world by a still more extraordinary speculation. The Deists sought to discredit the Old Testament by maintaining that the Mosaic Dispensation contained no reference to the immortality of the soul. Warburton allowed their premiss, but, instead of admitting their conclusion, he contended that the fact was in itself an indestructible proof of the 'Divine Legation of Moses;' his reason being that, in the absence of this doctrine, the system could never have established its authority if it had not been given from heaven. The book published under the above title was full of ingenious casuistry and curious reading, but was put together with a cumbrousness of style which fully justified Bentley's description of the author as 'a man of monstrous appetite but bad digestion.'

While still a young man, Warburton had been in close alliance with some of the prominent dunces, notably Theobald and Concanen, and had joined them in depreciating the genius of Pope. When, however, Crousaz published his 'Examen,' Warburton, who had been for some years Vicar of Brand-Broughton, saw fit to alter his course, and in a series of six letters, published in a weekly periodical called 'The Works of the

Learned,' he entered the lists in defence of the poet. His apology was conceived with great ingenuity. Crousaz had committed the error of assuming that Pope's motive had been to illustrate in verse the philosophy of Leibnitz, which the Professor alleged to be irreligious in its tendency. Warburton showed, on the other hand, from the Essay itself, that the poet's intention was 'to vindicate the ways of God to man' against the arguments of the Atheist; and he further proved that the doctrine of Optimism advanced in the poem might have been derived from Plato, who maintained the Freedom of the Will, quite as well as from Leibnitz, who denied it. After making the most of the advantages he had gained by the occupation of this position, he proceeded to slur over or explain away the more obviously Necessarian reasoning in the 'Essay,' partly by laying stress on stray references to the doctrine of Immortality (which Pope himself always strongly professed), and partly by attributing the main ambiguities of meaning to the badness of du Resnel's translation.

It may be added that much of his success was due to the unflinching assurance of his style. Thus, in his commentary on the Essay, he opens the explanation of the argument as follows:

"Ver. 43. *Of Systems possible, &c.*] So far the poet's modest and sober introduction: in which he truly observes, that no wisdom less than omniscient

'Can tell why Heaven has made us what we are.'

Yet though we be unable to discover the particular reasons for this mode of our existence, we may be assured in general that it is right. For now, entering upon his argument, he lays down this evident proposition as the foundation of his thesis, which he reasonably supposes will be allowed him, That, of all possible systems, infinite wisdom hath formed the best. Ver. 43, 44."

Though the question to be proved was, Whether the universe showed evidence of having been formed by Infinite Wisdom, and though the Atheists, denying this, offered in proof the existence of physical and moral evil, Pope had based his whole

argument against them on the baldest *petitio principii*, which his commentator, who must have been aware of the fallacy (for there was no question of the Omnipotence of God), now invested with all the pomp of formal Logic. The poet, however, who had committed himself to the versification of propositions of which he was unable to understand the natural corollaries, was not likely to be quick-sighted in detecting the sophistry of the arguments put forward on his behalf. The distress which he had felt at Crousaz' attack was equalled by his gratitude to his rescuer.

"I cannot help thanking you in particular," he wrote to Warburton on April 11, 1739, "for your third letter, which is so extremely clear, short, and full, that I think Mr. Crousaz ought never to have another answer, and deserved not so good a one. I can only say you do him too much honour, and me too much right, so odd as the expression seems, for you have made my system as clear as I ought to have done, and could not. It is indeed the same system as mine, but illustrated with a ray of your own, as they say our natural body is still the same when it is glorified. I am sure I like it better than I did before, and so will every man else. I know I meant just what you explain, but I did not explain my own meaning so well as you. You understand me as well as I do myself, but you express me better than I could express myself."

In another letter he goes even farther, and declares: "The translation you are a much better judge of than I, *not only because you understand my work better than I do myself*, but as your continued familiarity with the dead languages makes you infinitely more a master of them."[1] He was eager to make Warburton's acquaintance, and they met in April, 1740. Dodsley, the publisher, who was present at their first interview, says it took place in the garden of Lord Radnor, Pope's neighbour at Twickenham, and that he was astonished at the high compliments the poet paid Warburton as he approached him.[2] The intimacy after this period continued to increase, until the author of the Commentary on the 'Essay on Man' had gained as complete an ascendancy over the poet as had formerly

[1] Letter from Pope to Warburton of Oct. 27, 1740.

[2] Warton's Pope, ix. 342.

been possessed by the 'guide, philosopher, and friend,' who had furnished the original matter. Pope now made Warburton the confidant of all his literary intentions. On October 27, 1740, he writes to him: "Scriblerus will or will not be published according to the event of some other papers coming, or not coming out, which it will be my utmost endeavour to hinder. I will not give you the pain of acquainting you what they are." He alludes to his correspondence with Swift which was about to be published, by the direction indeed of the Dean, but, as we now know, through the contrivance of Pope himself. On the appearance of the Dublin edition of the correspondence, Curll, to whom a copy of the letters had also been conveyed, reprinted them, whereupon Pope filed a bill against him, and obtained an injunction. Acting on his old principle of the necessity of publishing authentic versions of his letters, he issued in 1741 a second volume of his Prose Works, both in folio and quarto, containing the complete correspondence with Swift, and the 'Memoirs of Scriblerus.'

He continued to give Warburton proofs of his gratitude and friendship. In the summer of this year he took him with him on a ramble, and introduced him to many of his influential friends. From one of these he seems to have obtained the promise of a living for the Vicar of Brand-Broughton, which would have brought the latter to the banks of the Thames, but the promise was not fulfilled. Among other places on their journey the two friends visited Oxford. The University proposed to confer upon Pope the degree of D. C. L. At the same time the Vice-Chancellor sent to Warburton to make him the offer of a Doctor's degree in Divinity, a compliment which was of course gladly accepted. A number of the clergy, however, looked, not unnaturally, with great suspicion on the opinions of the author of 'The Divine Legation,' and the Vice-Chancellor's proposal was strongly opposed. Pope was indignant on behalf of his friend:

"I have received some chagrin at the delay, for Dr. King tells me it will prove no more," he writes to Warburton on August 12, 1741,

of your degree at Oxon. As for mine, I will die before I receive it, in an art I am ignorant of, at a place where there remains any ruple at bestowing one on you, in a science of which you are so just master."

It was in consequence of this pique that he undertook, no ubt at Warburton's instigation, to complete the 'Dunciad' the addition of the fourth book, in which appear the lines on 'Apollo's Mayor and Aldermen,' satirising the University thorities. The main materials for the satire were already in istence. On the 25th March, 1736, he had told Swift that he oposed to add some Epistles to the 'Essay on Man.' The bject of one of them, he said, was to be "the use of learning, the science of the world, and of wit. It will conclude with satire against the misapplication of all these, exemplified by tures, characters, and examples." As scattered ideas of s kind occurred to him he doubtless put them into verse, ich in the same way as he added to the original 'Dunciad' es like those on the Gazetteers in the Diving Match, written relieve his political spleen in 1739.[1] These fragments he w threw into a connected form and published in March, 42, under the title of 'The New Dunciad, *as it was found* in year 1741.' In order, as usual, to mystify the public, it s stated that the poem was "found merely by accident in ing a survey of the library of a late eminent nobleman, but so blotted a condition, and in so many detached pieces, as inly showed it to be not only incorrect but unfinished." Though the satire had a general purpose, it was not devoid personal and party feeling. Thus the conclusion contains me lines reflecting the spirit of the Opposition. We find, as e of the effects of the great Yawn of Dulness,—

> "The vapour mild o'er each Committee crept;
> Unfinished Treaties in each office slept;
> And chiefless armies dozed out the campaign;
> And navies yawned for orders on the Main."

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[1] These were sent to Swift in 1739, the last he wrote to him. See Letter to Swift of May 17,

These verses were adapted from a squib of Halifax written in 1704, but they seem to point particularly to the failure of Walpole's Convention with Spain, and to the sluggish support which the Minister was accused of giving to the operations of Admiral Vernon in the Spanish Main.

A stroke of personal malice in the opening lines led to the last bitter personal quarrel in Pope's life:—

"Soft in her lap her Laureate son reclines."

The Poet Laureate of the day was Colley Cibber, who had succeeded Eusden in 1730. Since the day of their original quarrel, which has been already described, Pope had constantly alluded to him in his satires. In the third book of the 'Dunciad' he had ridiculed him for his encouragement of Pantomime to the injury of the genuine drama.[1] The 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' contained two references to him, one in his capacity of stage-manager, the other reflecting on the looseness of his private life and his fondness for the company of the nobility;[2] while, in the published correspondence with Jervas and Digby, there were sneers at the comedy of the 'Non-juror,' which had done much to procure Cibber's advancement.[3] A real compliment was paid, in the Epistle to Augustus, to his 'Careless Husband;'[4] but, in connection with so much that was uncomplimentary, Cibber chose to interpret this as irony, and after the appearance of 'The New Dunciad,' he published "A Letter from Mr. Cibber to Mr. Pope, inquiring into the motives that might induce him in his satirical works to be so frequently fond of Mr. Cibber's name." In this letter he gave an account of his first quarrel with the poet, and in revenge for what was said in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' about his private life, he told a ridiculous story calculated to show that Pope was not the person to reflect upon his morals. Pope, in

[1] 'Dunciad,' iii. 266.

[2] 'Epistle to Arbuthnot,' vv. 60 and 97.

[3] Letters from Pope to Jervas of July 9, 1716, and from Pope to Digby of March 31, 1718.

[4] 'Epistle to Augustus,' v. 92.

a fury, resolved on the unfortunate step of deposing Theobald from the throne of Dulness, and replacing him by Cibber, an alteration which deprived some of the best passages in the poem of point and meaning. 'The New Dunciad' was, as a natural consequence, incorporated with the old, with fresh notes to the four books written by Pope, but fathered by Warburton, who had undertaken to comment on the poet's entire works.

"A project has arisen in my head," the latter writes to Warburton on November 27, 1742, "to make you in some measure the editor of this new edition of the '*Dunciad*,' if you have no scruple of owning some of the graver notes, which are now added to those of Mr. Cleland and Dr. Arbuthnot. I mean it as a kind of prelude, or advertisement to the public of your Commentaries on the *Essay on Man* and on *Criticism*, which I propose to print next in another volume proportioned to this."

Warburton complied, and also wrote for the new edition "Ricardus Aristarchus on the Hero of the Poem." To this attack Cibber replied, though leisurely, with "Another occasional Letter from Mr. Cibber to Mr. Pope, wherein the new Hero's preferment to his throne in the Dunciad seems not to be accepted, and the author of that poem his more rightful claim to it is asserted. With an expostulatory address to the Rev. Mr. W. W——n, author of the new Preface, and adviser in the curious improvements of that Satire." Pope heard almost immediately of his enemy's intentions. The date affixed by Cibber to his letter is January 9th, 1743—4, and on the 12th of the same month, Pope wrote to Warburton:

"I am told the Laureate is going to publish a very abusive pamphlet. That is all I can desire; it is enough if it be abusive, and if it be his. He threatens you; but I think you will not fear him, or love him so much as to answer him, though you have answered one or two as dull. He will be more to me than a dose of hartshorn."

He had discoursed long before in the same vein to Caryll, after reading Dennis' 'Remarks on the Essay on Criticism,'[1] and to the younger Richardson who called on him when he

[1] Letter from Pope to Caryll of Nov. 19, 1712.

was reading Cibber's letter, he observed: "These things my diversions." The other, who saw his features working anguish as he read, said to his father on his return tha hoped he might himself be preserved from diversions of su kind.[1] But this is to anticipate the course of events.

The 'New Dunciad' was received, as it deserved, with g applause. In this poem, which is particularly interestin being Pope's latest work, we see the blending of the abs moral philosophy of the 'Essay on Man' with the pers melancholy and the profound political discontent which lat affected the poet's views of life. The whole is harmonise the grave and stately style he had acquired from the study of his favourite Latin poets. No one who reads noble verses describing the progress through Europe of travelled Dunce, can fail to admire in them the brill exemplification of the principles he had laid down a half-conscious spirit thirty years before in his 'E on Criticism.' A few contemporary notices of the satire sl how deeply the best judges of the time were impressed by Bolingbroke at first refrained from reading it on account of reported obscurity, but he afterwards declared it to be the and most finished of all Pope's writings. Gray criticise with his usual discrimination:

"As to the Dunciad," he writes to West, "it is greatly admi the genii of operas and schools with their attendants, the pleas of virtuosos and florists, and the yawn of Dulness at the end are as fi anything he has written. The metaphysician's part is to me the wo and here and there are a few ill-expressed lines, and some hardly i ligible."[2]

Gray had a great admiration for Pope. He was once in company, and seems to have carried away from the interv a respect for his character. On one point at least they m have felt for each other complete sympathy: both were voted and dutiful sons. There was much also that was sim in their genius. Both had the same power of condensed

[1] Johnson's 'Life of Pope.' [2] Carruthers, 'Life of Pope,' p. 3

polished expression; the same fine taste and instinct for what was right in art. Gray was greatly the superior in scholarship and learning, and had the stronger sense of the romantic and pathetic; but Pope, on the other hand, far excelled him in wit, ardour, animation, and vitality. Each was interested in the Latin poems of the Italians, a selection of which, previously made by Atterbury, was edited by Pope in 1740. Each also appears to have contemplated a History of English Poetry, for which Gray's accomplishments would have admirably qualified him, and which Pope's shrewdness and critical instinct would, in spite of his deficiencies in learning, have rendered extremely interesting. Ill-health and advancing age prevented the latter from attempting to execute his project, which he apparently formed about the year 1740. At this period he seems also to have been meditating an epic poem on the legendary subject of the Trojan Brutus,[1] and two moral Odes on the Evils of Arbitrary Power and the Vanity of Ambition, by the non-execution of which nothing has certainly been lost to English Poetry.

The metaphysician's part of the 'New Dunciad' was no doubt largely inspired by Warburton. When Pope was completing the poem he felt the necessity of having a learned counsellor by his side, and he accordingly, by the permission of Allen, in whose house he was staying at the time, summoned Warburton to join him.

"If," he writes to him, November 12, 1741, "it were practicable for you to pass a month or six weeks from home it is here I could wish to be with you: and if you would attend to the continuation of your own noble work [*i.e.*, the second volume of the 'Divine Legation'], or unbend to the idle amusement of commenting upon a poet who has no other merit than that of aiming by his moral strokes to merit some regard from such men as advance truth and virtue in a more effectual way; in either case this place and this house would be an inviolable asylum to you, from all you would desire to avoid in so public a scene as Bath. The worthy man, who is the master of it, invites you in the strongest terms; and is one who would treat you with love and veneration, rather than what the world calls civility and regard. He is sincerer and plainer than almost any man now in this world, *antiquis moribus.*"

[1] The design of this poem is described in Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 288.

Ralph Allen, who is thus described, was the son of a keeper in Cornwall, and was six years younger than Being employed in the Post Office at Bath he had devis formed a system of cross-posts, from which he made a fortune, a very considerable portion of which was sp charitable objects. All that Pope says of his chara borne out by other evidence, which may be summed up fact that he was the original of Squire Allworthy in Fie 'Tom Jones.' He had made Pope's acquaintance, as ha already said, in consequence of the admiration with wh had read his 'Correspondence,' and he had offered to be expenses connected with printing the authorised edition. that date the poet's visits to him at Bath had been fre The house from which the above letter to Warburto written was Prior Park, the building of which was be 1736, and was not completed till 1743. Pope, endeav to draw Warburton to his side, describes to him a comforts which will be at his command:

"You see I omit nothing to add to the weight in the bala which, however, I will not think myself light, since I have your partiality. You will want no servant here. Your room next to mine, and one man will serve us. Here is a librar gallery ninety feet long to walk in, and a coach whenever you take the air with me." [1]

Warburton accepted the invitation, and thus laid the fo tion of his fortune. In 1745 he married Allen's favourite Gertrude Tucker; he owed to Allen's interest several in his ecclesiastical advancement; and eventually, aft owner's death, he became the possessor of Prior Park.

His introduction to the Allens was productive of s consequences to the memory and reputation of a frie whom Pope took a more tender interest. I have alread that, at the end of the year 1717 and the beginning of Pope, as far as can be divined from his correspondenc fided to Teresa Blount his desire to marry her sister M

[1] Letter from Pope to Warburton of November 12, 1741.

Teresa seems to have opposed his wishes in a manner which, though his conduct to her through the entire episode is distinguished not only by forbearance but generosity, greatly distressed him. Her impetuous behaviour necessarily produced a change in their feelings for each other which gradually grew into mutual dislike; their correspondence ceased after 1720; and in 1725 Pope thought he had grounds for believing that Teresa had spread a report reflecting injuriously on his relations with Martha. There is every reason to suppose that, whoever was the author of the scandal, it was baseless, but the memory of it rankled in Pope's mind, and in the years 1729–1733 we find him in his correspondence with Caryll retailing rumours, probably no better founded, discreditable to the character of Teresa.[1] The Blounts at that period rented a house at Petersham, and it may easily be imagined that, between Pope and her sister, Martha's position was not an easy one. It is evident that she refused, in compliance with the wishes of her family, to sacrifice her friendship with the poet, but on the other hand she resisted with equal steadiness his entreaties that she would set up an independent establishment. By degrees her patience and resolution appear to have worn down the opposition of her mother and sister, and henceforth she visited, in the poet's company, at the houses of common friends, probably with complete innocence, but with some degree of inevitable scandal.

It is difficult to form a just estimate of her character. She could make herself agreeable to men of wit and imagination, and was a great favourite with both Swift and Arbuthnot. Women, on the other hand, generally speak of her with a certain tone of depreciation. Lady Worsley, for instance, alludes to her in a letter to Swift as 'dirty Patty.'[2] Lady Hervey, also, writing to Lady Suffolk, calls her a 'piece of proud flesh,'[3] while Horace Walpole, with his love

[1] See Vol. VI., pp. 308–341, *passim*.

[2] Letter from Lady Worsley to Swift of Aug. 6, 1732.

[3] Suffolk Letters, vol. ii., p. 106

of feminine gossip, has preserved the tradition that she was undoubtedly 'the mistress of Pope.' He says she was 'red-faced, fat, and by no means pretty,'[1] a description which agrees ill with her portrait, where her features appear bright and charming, though they may have become coarse with advancing years. In the eyes of Pope her character remained to the last what it had been in the days of their early acquaintance. In 1714 he writes to her:

"This *good-humour* and tenderness for me has a charm that cannot be resisted. That face must needs be irresistible which was adorned with smiles even when it could not see the coronation."[2]

In the midst of the family disputes at Petersham he observes:

"You have a temper that would make you *easy* and *beloved* (which is all the happiness one needs to wish in this world), and content with moderate things. All your point is not to lose that temper by sacrificing yourself to others, out of a mistaken tenderness, which hurts you and profits not them."[3]

And he repeats the same praise in the 'Epistle on the Characters of Women,' which he dedicated to her in 1735:

"The generous God who wit and gold refines,
And ripens spirit as he ripens wines,
Kept dross for duchesses, the world shall know it,
To you gave sense, *good humour*, and a poet."

The qualities attributed to Martha by one who knew her so well ought, on the whole, to be allowed more weight than what is spitefully insinuated, rather than openly alleged, by Warburton, who was deeply prejudiced against her in consequence of her quarrel with the Allens. Little is known of the rights of this dispute; but it appears that, Martha Blount being towards the end of 1743 on a visit with Pope at Prior Park, a difference arose between her and Mrs. Allen, of which the poet was in some way the cause. At Martha's instigation

[1] Prior's 'Life of Malone,' p. 437.
[2] Letter from Pope to Martha Blount, Vol. IX., p. 255.
[3] Letter of Pope to Martha Blount, No. 57, Vol. IX., p. 310.

he at once left the house, and proceeded to Lord Bathurst's, expecting that she too would take her departure; but being unable to make her arrangements for travelling, she was forced to remain for another day, and, as she said, to suffer further indignities. Pope was greatly moved by the treatment she described, and when, in the spring of 1744, Allen, who evidently thought that the matter had been exaggerated by feminine petulance on both sides, sought to heal the breach, the poet, though he did not decline his advances, treated him with a certain coolness. When Warburton brought out his edition of Pope's works in 1751, he remembered the offence, and meanly and dishonestly sought to deprive Martha Blount of the honour of the dedication of the Second Moral Essay, pretending that the concluding lines could never have been intended as the portrait of a character like hers.

The reconciliation between Pope and Allen was effected in March, 1744, at Twickenham, when the former was sinking under his last illness. In the previous December, finding his strength gradually failing, he had made his will, which shows traces of the struggle in his mind between his sense of obligation to Allen and his absorbing attachment to Martha Blount. To the former he left one hundred and fifty pounds, "being"—so the will ran—"to the best of my calculation, the amount of what I have received from him, partly for my own, and partly for charitable uses." To Martha he left one thousand pounds, to be paid immediately after his death, the furniture of his grotto, garden urns, household goods, chattels, and plate, together with the interest, during her life, of the invested value of all his estate, money, or bonds.[1] In other respects the directions of the will faithfully reflected the friendship of his life. He left to Boling-

[1] Martha Blount informed Spence that what was over after paying legacies, &c., did not amount to two thousand pounds, besides the thousand pounds specifically left to her in the will. 'Anecdotes,' p. 357. Johnson ('Life of Pope') says that Martha Blount "refused any legacy from Pope unless he left the world with a disavowal of obligation to Allen." But Martha herself told Spence that she had never seen Pope's will, and

broke the inspection of all his MSS. and unprinte
that he might preserve or destroy them as he tho
and he bequeathed to Warburton "the property of
of his works already printed as he had written o
write commentaries or notes upon, and all the prof
should arise after his death from such editions as h
publish without future alterations."

He continued to the last supervising with un
interest the issue of fresh editions of his works.
volume, answering to the 'Dunciad,' and contai
Essay on 'Man' and 'Criticism,' with Warburton's
taries on each, was published in 1743, and the latter
steadily annotating the 'Ethic Epistles.' As late
1744, Pope wrote to Warburton:

"I received yours just now and write to hinder Bo
printing the comment on the 'Use of Riches' too hastily,
you write to me, intending to have forwarded it otherwis
might revise it during your stay. Indeed my present wea
make me less and less capable of anything."[1]

The 'Ethic Epistles' were completed about thr
before his death, and he gave copies of them to hi
"Here I am like Socrates," said he to Spence, "dispe
morality among my friends just as I am dying."[2] C
edition, so far as is known, only one copy survives,
now in the British Museum.[3] It contains the cha
Atossa. The rest were destroyed for reasons of wh
must be said presently.

The illness which proved fatal to the poet was as
dropsy. On the 25th of February, 1744, Bolingbr
to Marchmont, advising that Ward, the inventor of
so often alluded to in Pope's Satires, should be sum

that when he told her his intentions with regard to the mention of Allen, he tried to persuade him to omit it, but could not prevail with him. Anecdotes,' p. 357.

[1] Letter from Pope to Warburton, Vol. IX., p. 242.

[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,'

[3] It is in a volume with on Man and Criticism, a 1743.

prescribe for him. No remedies produced any substantial relief, and though the patient had still strength enough to look forward to moving to London, he was unable to leave his room through the whole of March. He had hoped to bring Warburton and Bolingbroke together in his presence at the house of the latter at Battersea, but the two philosophers were obliged to meet by themselves, and parted with a hearty dislike for each other. The asthma, as the poet wrote to Richardson, seemed immovable,[1] and as a last resource, in April, he called in the assistance of Dr. Thompson, a quack, having heard from his friend Bethel of a miraculous cure that he had effected.[2] Thompson treated him for dropsy, and, as Pope wrote to Lord Orrery, drew from him "a great quantity of pure water."[3] The remedy proved futile. The quack, indeed, pretended to discover signs of improvement, but Pope was not deceived, and when Lyttelton came to see him on the 15th of May he observed: "Here am I dying from a hundred good symptoms." He said that what he suffered from most was the finding himself unable to think. His mind now began sometimes to wander. He saw everything in the room as through a curtain, and objects in false colours. On one occasion, "he said to me," writes Spence, "'What's that?' pointing into the air with a very steady regard, and then looked down on me, and said with a smile of great pleasure, and with the greatest softness, 'Twas a vision.'"[4] At another time he rose from his bed at four o'clock, and was discovered in his library writing an Essay on the Immortality of the Soul. Traces of his old self-consciousness still remained. On the 27th of May he quoted two of his own verses in illustration of his character:

> "I, who at some times spend, at others spare,
> Divided betwixt carelessness and care."[5]

He continued to receive his friends, and Warburton told

[1] Letter from Pope to Richardson of March 26, 1744.

[2] Letter from Hugh Bethel to Pope of March 25, 1744.

[3] Pope to Lord Orrery, Vol. VIII., p. 519.

[4] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 319.

[5] Imitation of Horace, Book II. Epistle 2, 290.

Spence that it "was very observable during Pope's last illness that Mrs. Blount's coming in gave a new turn of spirits or temporary strength to him,"—testimony which is a sufficien contradiction of the spiteful tales which the same witnes afterwards circulated through Ruffhead of the poet's sense o Martha's unfeeling and neglectful behaviour. Spence say that Bolingbroke was greatly affected when Pope spoke of th suffering he experienced from not being able to think, an wept over him, exclaiming several times, interrupted by sobs "O great God, what is man?"[1] On the 27th of May he re quested to be brought down to the room where his friend were at dinner, while on the 29th he had still sufficien strength to be driven out in Bushey Park. On his retur Hooke the historian, a fervent Catholic, asked if he migh send for a priest. Pope replied: "I do not suppose that i essential, but it will look right, and I heartily thank you fo putting me in mind of it." According to Warton, he exerte his strength to throw himself out of bed, that he might receiv the Sacrament kneeling on the floor. Very shortly before hi death he observed: "I am so certain of the soul's being im mortal, that I feel it within me as it were by intuition."[2] H died very peacefully on the evening of Wednesday the 30t of May, 1744, nine days after his fifty-sixth birthday. H was buried according to the instructions in his will, i Twickenham Church, his body being borne by six of th poorest men in the parish, each of whom, as in the case c his mother's funeral, was presented with a suit of grey cloth a mourning. A line recording the date of his death and his ag was added to the monument in the church which he had himse erected to the memory of his parents, the inscription on whic now ran: "D. O. M. Alexandro Pope, viro innocuo, probro, pi Qui vixit annos LXXV., ob. MDCCXVII., et Edithæ conjugi incul pabili, Qui vixit annos XCIII., ob. MDCCXXXIII. Parentibus ben merentibus Filius fecit et sibi. Obiit anno 1744, ætatis 56."

[1] 'Anecdotes,' p. 320.

[2] Spence's 'Anecdotes,' p. 321.

The best description of Pope's person is furnished by Sir Joshua Reynolds who, as a boy, once saw him and says: "He was about four feet six high, very hump-backed and deformed. He had a very large and very fine eye, and a long handsome nose; his mouth had those peculiar marks which are always found in the mouths of crooked persons; and the muscles which run across the cheeks were so strongly marked as to appear like small cords. Roubilliac the statuary, who made a bust of him from life, observed that his countenance was that of a person who had been much afflicted with headache, and that he should have known the fact from the contracted appearance of the skin above the eyebrows, though he had not been otherwise apprised of it."[1] The effects of these headaches are mentioned in the earliest letters of Wycherley to Pope, and by the poet himself through his entire correspondence. They were probably the cause of the sleeplessness from which he suffered, so that he was in the habit of thinking and writing in the middle of the night, and often required to be attended for the purpose. A woman-servant, who had had experience of his ways, told Johnson that she was called up constantly to provide for his wants, but that his liberality was such that in a house where he visited she would not ask for wages. He was, as we see from the Bathurst letters, an intemperate feeder; and Dr. King, who knew him, says, in his 'Anecdotes,' "Pope's form of body did not promise long life, but he certainly hastened his death by feeding much on high-seasoned dishes, and drinking spirits."[2]

His will was the source of some mortification to his relatives, and of much malignant scandal about himself. Mrs. Rackett, his half-sister, entered a *caveat* against it in Doctors' Commons, and seems to have taken some proceedings; but after two years the affair dropped. More lasting mischief was done by the clause in the will which constituted Bolingbroke the guardian of the poet's unpublished papers. Hardly was

[1] Prior's 'Life of Malone,' p. 429. [2] King's 'Anecdotes,' p. 12.

Pope dead, when the old Duchess of Marlborough sent to Bolingbroke, through Lord Marchmont, entreating his good offices in case anything affecting her own or the Duke's reputation should be found among the MSS. in his keeping. Bolingbroke replied:

"I continue in the resolution I mentioned to you last night upon what you said to me from the Duchess of Marlborough. It would be a breach of that confidence which Pope reposed in me to give any one such of his papers as I think no one should see. If there are any that may be injurious to the late Duke or her Grace, even indirectly and covertly, as I hope there are not, they shall be destroyed, and you shall be a witness to their destruction. Copies of any such I hope and believe there are none abroad; and I hope the Duchess will believe I scorn to keep copies when I destroy originals."[1]

Almost immediately afterwards, however, Bolingbroke made a discovery which he communicated to Marchmont in the following letter:

"Our friend Pope, it seems, corrected and prepared for the press, just before his death, an edition of the four Epistles that follow the 'Essay on Man.' They are printed off and are now ready for publication. I am sorry for it, because if he could be excused for writing the character of Atossa formerly, there is no excuse for his design of publishing it after the favour you and I know; and the character of Atossa is inserted. I have a copy of the book. Warburton has the propriety of it, as you know. Alter it he cannot by the terms of the will. Is it worth while to suppress the edition? or should her Grace's friends say (as they may from several strokes in it) that it was not intended for her character? and should she despise it? If you come over hither we may talk better than write on the subject."[2]

Eventually some arrangement must have been made with Warburton, and the entire edition was suppressed. Shortly after, however, Bolingbroke made another discovery, which bitterly incensed him against the memory of his friend. He had instructed Pope, in 1738, to have printed for him a few copies of "Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism, On the Idea of a Patriot King, and On the State of Parties." After Pope's

[1] Letter from Bolingbroke to Marchmont of May 30, 1744

[2] 'Marchmont Papers,' vol. ii. p. 334.

death, Wright, a printer, brought and gave over to Bolingbroke an impression of fifteen hundred copies which the poet had ordered him to retain secretly. It is said that the edition was prepared at the suggestion of Allen, who greatly admired the Essays and defrayed the expense of printing. Pope had, however, according to Bolingbroke's account, "taken upon him further to divide the subject, and to alter or omit passages according to the suggestions of his own fancy." It is probable that this act of gratuitous criticism constituted his chief offence in the eyes of Bolingbroke, who can hardly have supposed the breach of trust to have proceeded from any motives but genuine admiration for himself. He affected, however, great moral indignation. A bonfire of the edition was in the first place made on the terrace at Battersea; but Bolingbroke retained a copy, and afterwards caused it to be published through his agent Mallet. In the meantime he made use of the same reptile spirit to defame Pope's memory, by publishing the very lines on the Duchess of Buckingham of which he had formerly procured the suppression. The character of Atossa first appeared in 1746 in a folio sheet with the following note appended to it:

"These verses are part of a poem entitled 'Characters of Women.' It is generally said the D—— gave Mr. P. £1000 to suppress them: he took the money, yet the world sees the verses; but this is not the first instance where Mr. P.'s practical virtue has fallen very short of those pompous professions of it he makes in his writings."

This was evidently written by an enemy, and that enemy was Bolingbroke or Bolingbroke's agent, for they alone had knowledge of the facts to which the note refers. Yet upon this hostile evidence has been founded the scandal which, first started by Warton, has been repeated from one biographer to another, to the lasting damage of Pope's reputation. Warton tells the story as follows:

"These lines were shown to her Grace as if they were intended for the portrait of the Duchess of Buckingham; but she soon stopped the person who was reading them to her, as the Duchess of Portland in-

formed me, and called out aloud, 'I cannot be so imposed on: I see plainly enough for whom they were designed;' and abused Pope most plentifully on the subject, though she was afterwards reconciled to him, and courted him, and gave him a thousand pounds to suppress this portrait, which he accepted, it is said, by the persuasion of Mrs. M. Blount; and after the Duchess's death it was printed in a folio sheet, 1746, and afterwards here" [*i.e.*, in the 'Second Moral Essay'] "inserted with those of Philomede and Chloe."

In my Introduction to the 'Second Moral Essay' I discussed very fully the truth of this story. I pointed out the intrinsic improbability of Warton's statement, that Pope had received £1000 from the Duchess expressly for the purpose of suppressing the character of Atossa; I showed that the first publication of the character, and the report as to the £1000 on which Warton's narrative was partially based, were evidently the work of an enemy of Pope; and I gave my reasons for believing that it was Pope's intention when the character was published to declare it to be the portrait of Katherine, Duchess of Buckingham. The volume of this edition containing the 'Second Moral Essay' was published before the appearance of the Eighth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, which contained some letters between Pope and the Duchess of Marlborough, now reprinted as an appendix to the present volume. These letters not only indirectly confirm in a remarkable manner the reasoning which led me to the conclusions I have just stated, but enable me to give a more favourable account of Pope's conduct in the matter than my previous review of all the circumstances of the case had allowed me to hope possible. I concluded, contrary to the opinion of Mr. Dilke, that Pope did receive £1000 from the Duchess, and that there was some bargain between them, but that it was not of such a specific nature as Warton declares. The recently published correspondence, on the other hand, proves beyond question that the £1000 (as 'the favour' spoken of by Bolingbroke in his letter to Marchmont suggests) was not part of a contract, but was a free gift.

On the whole I think it may now be fairly inferred that the

facts of the case are as follows. Pope wrote the character of Atossa in 1732 when, as Bolingbroke said, 'he had some excuse;' in other words while the Duchess of Marlborough, aiding Walpole with her vast wealth, was still an obnoxious person to all members of the Opposition. Powerful as she then was, he thought it best to reserve the publication of the satire till the next age. In 1739, however, the Duchess had thrown all her influence into the scale against Walpole. She allied herself closely with the leading members of the Opposition, and showed a particular desire to stand well with Pope. "The Duchess of Marlborough," writes the poet to Swift, April 28, 1739, in the last letter he sent to him, "makes great court to me, but I am too old for her, mind and body." It does not appear that she took part in the Grotto conferences, as it is evident from the correspondence that she had not visited Pope in his villa when she wrote to him her first dated letter, August 13, 1741. Later in that year, however, she was anxious to publish her papers, and Pope took some pains to procure for her the assistance of Hooke, the historian, who, from the materials she gave him, compiled his 'Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough.' Under these altered circumstances, Pope bethought him that it was now no longer necessary to reserve the character of Atossa for the next age. As I have suggested in my 'Introduction,' he was naturally desirous that the world should read his striking verses. But being resolved, in the first place, to make his position secure, he read them to the Duchess as the portrait of the Duchess of Buckingham. She, it is said, penetrated the deception, and 'abused Pope plentifully;' but it is added by Warton that she was afterwards reconciled to him; and indeed it would not have been difficult for him to have shown her that the entire character, which had no doubt been considerably altered, could be made applicable to Katherine of Buckingham, while many strokes in it were inapplicable to herself

In former days he had been an intimate friend of the Duke and Duchess of Buckinghamshire, and the latter writes to

acknowledge that she is under obligations to him.[1] In 1728 he appears to have purchased an annuity from the guardians of the young Duke.[2] Not long afterwards, according to his own account, the Duchess showed him a character of herself, written by some other hand, in which he made some trifling amendments; but she almost immediately took occasion to quarrel with him, and he saw nothing of her for five or six years. When her son died in 1735 she appears to have asked Pope to write his epitaph; and she circulated the report that the complimentary character mentioned above was his composition, an assertion which the poet flatly contradicted.[3] All these circumstances, if explained to the Duchess of Marlborough, would have made her, on reflection, inclined to credit his declaration that the character of Atossa was not intended to ridicule herself.

As her apology in the 'Conduct' testifies, however, she was extremely anxious that her memory should stand clear, so that she would have naturally sought to propitiate the dreaded satirist by all the means in her power. She knew perhaps that he had written, though he had not published, the satire upon her husband, a fac-simile of which has been inserted in the present edition.[4] She begged Lord Marchmont, in 1742, to endeavour to keep him her friend. The recently published correspondence shows also beyond doubt that she pressed him incessantly to accept some considerable present; that he at first was equally persistent in refusing it, but in the end yielded to her importunity. We see them also writing to each other letters of the most friendly description, certainly as late as the summer of 1743, and probably in 1744.

With such relations existing between them, it is utterly incredible that Pope would have ventured to publish, as he was about to do, the character of Atossa in the lifetime of

[1] Letter from Duchess of Buckingham to Pope, Vol. X., p. 154.

[2] Letter from Pope to Lord Bathurst of Nov. 7, 1728.

[3] Letter from Pope to Moyser, July 11, 1743. See Vol. X., pp. 216–17.

[4] At the beginning of Vol. III.

the Duchess, had there either been any specific bargain on his part to suppress it, or had he even believed that she any longer supposed it to be meant for a satire on herself. He must have intended to let it be known on its appearance that its original was the Duchess of Buckingham, who had recently died. His own death prevented the explanation. Bolingbroke, who knew the intention with which the character had been originally written, who knew also of 'the favour' Pope had received from the Duchess of Marlborough, but who was not aware of his design of re-naming the portrait, was naturally amazed after the poet's death to find the verses prepared for publication. He concluded Pope to be guilty of inexcusable ingratitude, and afterwards, in his vindictive desire to avenge his own injuries, he sought to damage the poet's memory by causing the character to be printed on the folio sheet with the hostile note which a generation later served for the foundation of Warton's gossiping scandal. Warburton, who had been a consenting party to the suppression of the edition of the 'Ethic Epistles,' was of course precluded from marking any direct defence of his friend, but from the note which he attached to the 'Character of Katherine, Duchess of Buckinghamshire,' it may be inferred, that if he had felt himself able, he would have put forward the explanation of the character of Atossa, which, coming from Pope himself, would of course have been accepted as conclusive.[1]

[1] See Appendix IV., 'Remarks on the Character of Katherine, Duchess of Buckinghamshire.'

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PLACE OF POPE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

Difference between the Greek and the Mediæval Idea of Nature—Decay of the Mediæval Idea—Revival of Classical Principles of Criticism—Pope's Principles of Poetical Conception and Poetical Diction—Objections to his Principles and Practice—Historical survey of the Revival of the Romantic Principle—Warton—Bowles—Controversy respecting Pope in 1819—Rise of the Lake School—Wordsworth's theory of Poetical Conception and Poetical Diction—Coleridge's opinion—Examination of the Theory of Wordsworth and Coleridge—Matthew Arnold's view of Pope's place in English Literature—Conclusion.

EVERY biography of Pope is certain to occasion a great variety of judgments. As far, indeed, as it is a record of action there is not likely to be much difference of opinion as to the merits of the hero. The life of Pope is the first example in English history of the rise of a man of letters, by literature alone, to a position not only of honourable independence, but of familiarity with the most powerful and distinguished among his contemporaries, and of influence in the political struggles of the age. This position was won in the face of extraordinary disadvantages arising out of obscure birth, feeble health, and religious prejudice. Success so achieved, by acknowledged genius united to heroic patience and industry, deserves from English society, and especially from men of letters, a tribute of generous admiration.

The character developed in this long struggle after fame naturally excites more mixed feelings. In almost every scene of Pope's eventful history we see a conflict of strangely opposing qualities. A consciousness of genius and a passionate desire for distinction were joined in him with a painful ever-present sense of the ridicule attaching to his physical infirmities. A

powerful mind, subtly appreciative of the finest beauties of form, was lodged in a sickly and misshapen body. Romantic sensibility and a large benevolence accompanied a satiric temper and a deadly vindictiveness against those who crossed his interests or mortified his vanity. These elementary tendencies received an impulse and direction from a peculiarly secluded education, which accustomed his mind to the use of equivocation, as the legitimate weapon of the weak against the powerful. Insatiable desire of praise or vengeance drove him into many actions of the paltriest dishonesty. Nevertheless, while he was pursuing his own ends by illegitimate means, it often happened that a certain warmth and largeness of heart engaged him in deeds of the most genuine benevolence. Hence, as Lord Chesterfield says: "Pope was as great an instance as any he quotes of the contrarieties and inconsistencies of human nature; for notwithstanding the malignancy of his satires and some blamable passages of his life, he was charitable to his power, active to do good offices, and piously attentive to an old bed-ridden mother who died but a little time before him." It is not wonderful that, of those who attempt to find the key to such a character in a single principle, some should seek to paint him as the honest man he professed, and probably believed, himself to be, while others should depict him, in the style of his enemies, as an unmitigated hypocrite.

Much of the same atmosphere of debate hangs round his reputation as a poet. The dispute on this point between himself and the Dunces, renewed in the following generation between Johnson and Warton, and in the succeeding age between Bowles on the one side, and Byron, Campbell, Roscoe, and Disraeli on the other, has hardly been ended in our own time. It remains for me in this chapter to place before the reader the main outlines of the controversy, and to examine, with such impartiality as may be, the issues which are at stake.

The poetry of Pope occupies a central position between two fluctuating movements of English taste. The classical

school of the eighteenth century, of which he was the pioneer, was a protest against what has been rightly called the metaphysical school of the seventeenth century, just as the romantic school which arose in the early part of the present century was a reacting movement in art against the critical principles of the classical school. We ought not to regard the differing characteristics of these poetical groups as so many isolated phænomena: each is bound to the other by a historical connection, the full significance of which must be determined by reference to the course of English poetry as a whole. In other words, to appreciate the true meaning of the conflicts respecting the principles of poetry that have divided, and still divide, rival schools of criticism in this country, it is necessary to investigate the origin of the idea of Nature which each party holds to be the foundation of Art. To do this with completeness would require a volume, but the following outlines may serve as a supplement to what I have already said on the subject in the chapter on the 'Essay on Criticism.'

Greek poetry, both in its practice and its theory, was based on the direct imitation of nature; that is to say, its subject-matter was, for the most part, derived from its own mythology, and was presented in forms which, to a great extent, arose out of the popular and religious institutions underlying all Greek social life. From these purely natural forms Aristotle reasoned to general principles which, according to him, were the laws of the Art of Poetry. The Roman poets and critics, adopting Greek models, carried them into all countries in which Latin culture predominated, so that before the fall of the Roman Empire what may be called a common sense of Nature, and common rules of rhetoric, prevailed wherever the art of poetry was practised in Europe.

The irruption of the barbarians obliterated like a deluge the landmarks of ancient criticism; the Latin language itself was only saved from destruction in the ark of the Christian Church. All the reasoning of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian seemed, like the Roman empire itself, to have completely

perished: for whole centuries the voice of poetry was silent in the Western World. In course of time new languages began to spring out of the decomposition of Latin, and, as was natural, their infancy was cradled in new forms of the poetic art. But the idea of Nature reflected in these forms was no longer one derived from direct imitation. A fresh conception of Man's relation to God, of the life beyond the grave, and consequently of the material universe, had come into being with the Christian Religion. And not only had Christianity supervened, but upon Christianity had been grafted Theology, and on Theology the Scholastic Philosophy. When we consider that the reappearance of Poetry is almost contemporaneous with the appearance of the Schoolmen, we can hardly doubt that much of the intellectual subtlety distinguishing the art of the Provençals was derived from the same atmosphere which inspired the five great doctors of the Mediæval Church. Other influences, no doubt, contributed largely to the creation of the new Idea of Nature. The prevalence of feudal institutions, the enthusiasm of the Crusades, the neighbourhood of Oriental thought, represented by the Arabs in Spain, and by the philosophy of Averroes and Avicenna incorporated in Christian theology; all this, operating on minds learning to express themselves in novel forms of language, and unfettered by the critical principles of the ancient world encouraged a new and vigorous growth of poetical conception. Hence the multitude of forms in which the poets of that early age manipulate what to us appears an extraordinary triviality of matter. Sirvente, Sonnet, Ballad, Virelay, Tenson, with all their subtle and scientific combinations of harmony, convey to us ideas of nature far more shadowy than do the odes of Horace; nevertheless it is evident that for the audiences of the Middle Ages they possessed not only music but warmth and meaning.

In time the mediæval idea of Nature ceased to commend itself to the general sense of Europe. The wars between Christian and Paynim ceased; the wide-spread system of Feu-

dalism waned before the advance of centralising Monarchy; the Reformation divided the Western World into two opposing camps; and, with the Balance of Power that began to emerge from the chaos, appeared the first rudiments of International Law. Yet so vigorous and trenchant were the forms of Mediæval Art, that they long survived the dissolution of the social conditions out of which they originally sprang. Dryden has well said that all poets have their family descents. And if anything is plain, it is that the poets of the seventeenth century in the various countries of Europe are directly and lineally descended from mediæval masters of the art. In Italy the long-lived family of the Petrarchists echoed faithfully, if monotonously, the music of their first ancestor; in Spain Cultorists and Conceptualists aimed at the same subtleties of thought and language that may be found in the original manner of the Troubadours; Voiture in France amused the society of the Hôtel Rambouillet with rondeau, ballad, and sonnet, the prototypes of which had helped to dispel the *ennui* of the feudal castle in the intervals of the Crusades; Saccharissas and Castaras in England emulated the fame of Beatrice and Laura; Quarles meditated his 'Emblems,' and Phineas Fletcher his 'Purple Island,' just as if the allegorical interpretation of Nature still held the field, and Bacon had not succeeded to the throne of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Meantime, however, the foundations of a new critical tradition were being silently laid. The old classical principle of the direct imitation of Nature, rising from its ashes, was everywhere reasserting its authority. We may fairly boast that the honour of having first revived the practice of this great principle belongs to an Englishman. Dante and Petrarch indeed show the influence of classical *forms* in their language, but the cast of their thought is purely mediæval: the earliest poem which embodies the genuine classical spirit is Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales.' Afterwards Ariosto applied the imitative principle with the perfection of taste in the 'Orlando Furioso,' and Cervantes in 'Don Quixote:' it found among the French

a dramatic exponent in Molière and a poetical critic in Boileau. In this country Shakespeare made his Hamlet commend the principle to the players; and Dryden gave it a new application in the historical portrait-painting of his 'Absalom and Achitophel.' But the English poet who first consciously recognised the value of the truth as a canon of criticism, and upheld it by a regular system of reasoning, was undoubtedly Pope.

It was natural that it should be so. Pope was the poet of the Revolution of 1688. Up to that date the Court, still the most powerful factor in the formation of English taste, had been under the influence of mediæval ideas in all matters of Church or State: the opinion of the body of the nation weighed little with the artist. Mediæval traditions in art were therefore still recent, and had to be reckoned with. On the other hand the removal of the predominant influence of the Court, and the consequent appearance in society of all kinds of new tastes and instincts requiring satisfaction, produced a condition of things perplexing to the judgment. Pope describes the change in some memorable lines:

> "Time was, a sober Englishman would knock
> His servants up, and rise by five o'clock;
> Instruct his family in every rule,
> And send his wife to church, his son to school.
> To worship like his fathers was his care,
> To teach their frugal virtues to his heir:
> To prove that luxury could never hold;
> And place on good security his gold.
> Now times are changed, and one poetic itch
> Has seized the Court and city, poor and rich:
> Sons, sires, and grandsires, all will wear the bays,
> Our wives read Milton, and our daughters plays,
> To theatres and to rehearsals throng,
> And all our grace at table is a song." [1]

For a society still in a state of revolution, and distracted by so many conflicting opinions and interests, the first necessity, as far as art was concerned, was to form a clear, positive, and

[1] 'Epistle to Augustus,' 161—174.

intelligible idea of Nature. Pope had to ask himself two questions: How much of the old interpretation of Nature is applicable to the new conditions of things, created by the changes in knowledge and society? and, How far can the time-honoured practices of modern poetry be adapted to suit the catholic requirements of good taste and good sense?

To these questions he returned upon the whole a highly conservative answer. The main difference between his interpretation of Nature and that of the mediæval poets, as far as his art was concerned, lies in his suppression of the theological element. He knew well that, in a society from which religious belief is excluded, poetry must cease to exist. The exact form of his own religious belief is doubtful, but there is every reason to conclude that his religious *instinct* was deep and sincere. His opinions may have been influenced by isolated speculations in Shaftesbury, Mandeville, and the Deists, but he always manifested abhorrence of their principles as enemies of the established faith. Indeed he appears to have continued, to the end of his life, to use the external ceremonies of the religion in which he had been educated, as a means of expression for his feelings. But with the exception of his boyish paraphrase of Thomas à Kempis, there is absolutely nothing in his poetry of a spiritual cast. His imagination meddled neither with Theology which, on the critical principle laid down by Boccaccio, had been the life and soul of all mediæval poetry from Dante to Milton; nor with the scholasticism which had directly or indirectly inspired the metaphysical school of English poetry; nor with the controversy between the Churches which had furnished Dryden with matter for his 'Hind and Panther.' He describes himself as

> "Papist or Protestant, or both between,
> Like good Erasmus in an honest mean."

With Erasmus, Bacon, Locke, and Newton, he shunned the disputatious element in the region of faith, but the influence of Bolingbroke seems to have carried him one step

further, and to have led him to hold that the Nature of God cannot be even partially known to Man:

> "Thou First Great Cause, least understood,
> Who all my sense confined
> To know but this, that thou art good—
> And that myself am blind."

As the necessary corollary of this proposition, he always insists strongly, both in his poetry and in his letters, that the essence of religion is conduct:

> "For forms of faith let graceless zealots fight;
> He can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

The governing principle in his idea of Nature may therefore be described as Catholic Deism; but of this metaphysical element there is no trace in his poetry, he deals only with the *effects* of Religion, which he holds to be Virtue, or the want of it, which he pronounces to be Vice.

A corresponding spirit of moderation is visible in his principles of poetical reform. The most sublime poetry of mediæval Europe sprang, as Boccaccio says, out of the theological habit of finding in material objects emblems or parables of the spiritual world. The spirit animating such poetry soon declined, but men continued to derive pleasure from the imaginative exercise of discovering resemblances in apparently dissimilar objects. The general favour with which this kind of composition was received in the seventeenth century is shown by the fact that the word 'Wit' was regarded as synonymous with poetry or poetical conception. Pope proved his sagacity by not recommending any abrupt departure from the common ideal, but by changing its scope and definition—

> "True wit is Nature to advantage dressed;
> What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed"—

a maxim which in itself points to a complete revolution in criticism. For it signifies in other words that true Wit, or just Poetical Conception, lies in selecting subjects proper for imaginative imitation, and in presenting them in the most

suitable ideal form. The metaphysical poet excited astonishment by pretending to discover between differing objects resemblances which were invisible to common sense. Pope, on the other hand, took as the basis of his art some imaginative idea of Nature, common to the reader as well as to himself, and produced pleasure by the clearness and beauty of the form in which he clothed it. He thus reverted to the fundamental principle underlying all the best poetry of Greece and Rome, which Horace had already versified in another way,

> "Cui lecta potenter erit res,
> Nec facundia deseret hunc, nec lucidus ordo."

His views of poetical diction were analogous. To the poet of the seventeenth century the essence of poetry lay in the invention of metaphor. But Pope said:

> "A vile conceit in pompous language dressed
> Is like a clown in regal purple dressed.
> *Expression is the dress of thought*, and still
> Appears more decent as more suitable,"

thus reviving the doctrine of Aristotle, who says in his Poetics that the soul of a dramatic poem is in its fable or design,[1] of which the language is only the external manifestation, and who, though he dilates on the nature of metaphor in itself, does so only in an analysis of poetical diction. When the occasion rquires Pope can always raise his diction by brilliant and picturesque imagery, as when, describing the triumph of Vice, he writes:

> "In golden chains the willing world she draws,
> And hers the gospel is, and hers the laws,
> Mounts the tribunal, lifts her scarlet head,
> And sees pale Virtue carted in her stead"—

or the immortality conferred by Poetry:

> "Not so when, diademed with rays divine,
> Touched with the flame that breaks from Virtue's shrine,
> The priestess Muse forbids the good to die,
> And opes the temple of eternity"—

[1] Περὶ Ποιητικῆς, 6.

or speaking of his ethical poems:

> "He *stooped* to Truth and moralised his song"— [1]

or of the vanity of earthly pleasure:

> "In Folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy"—

or of the Ruling Passion:

> "In Life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
> Reason the card, but Passion is the gale:
> Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
> He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind."

But in many of his most famous passages, such as the character of Atticus, the Man of Ross, the death-bed of Buckingham, the metaphors are few, and the force of the language consists in the extraordinary felicity of the words selected to describe objects affecting to the imagination.

Two objections have been made to Pope's idea of poetical conception and execution, one of which appears to be much more valid than the other. It is objected to his imaginative idea of Nature that it is too limited; that in effect it includes only the nature of Man; his representations of life being confined to ethical subjects, or to the manners and characters of refined society; and that it excludes the romantic and pathetic element, which constitutes so large a part of the interest in the highest kind of poetry. It must be admitted that this charge is in itself well-founded, and that, in consequence, Pope cannot be placed in the same rank as a poet with great writers like Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton, whose work is more spacious and sublime in its scope. On the other hand it is just to remember that Pope was essentially the poet of his age, and that, with admirable judgment, he adapted his genius to what he felt were the necessities of his art.

[1] The image implies the descent of an eagle upon its quarry.

The poetry of the eighteenth century has, in this respect, a close analogy to its politics. In itself, for instance, the Whig idea of the English Constitution is narrow and inadequate; yet who doubts that the supremacy of the Whig party in the first half of the eighteenth century was necessary for the establishment of Constitutional liberty? Similarly the merit of Pope lies less in his actual conceptions of nature, than in his just methods of representing it, in his demonstration of the artistic necessity of *subject* in poetry, and of the exactness of harmony between subject and form. When critics complain of the limitation of his art, they should compare the methods of himself and his followers with those of the bulk of seventeenth-century poets, setting aside Shakespeare and Milton. They would then see that, in a poem like the 'Seasons,' in which the imagery is drawn almost entirely from rural life; in the 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' or the 'Deserted Village,' which are deeply pathetic; even in 'Childe Harold,' which is thoroughly romantic, the design is formed on the critical principles first formulated by Pope. Contrarily, they would find that, in the great majority of seventeenth-century poets, even in Dryden himself, a general idea of Nature is wanting, their poems being founded upon private, partial, or transitory conceptions, which have long lost their interest for the modern reader.[1]

The other objection strikes at Pope's poetical diction, as a thing *per se*. Cowper, foreshadowing the attack made on Pope by Wordsworth and Coleridge in the next generation, says in his 'Table Talk' that

> "He (his musical finesse was such,
> So nice his ear, so delicate his touch),
> Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
> And every warbler has the tune by heart."

No criticism, in my opinion, was ever more superficial or unjust.

[1] I am speaking of the written poetry of the seventeenth century, not of the acted drama.

Certain strongly marked features in Pope's treatment of the heroic measure, such as the emphatic marking of the cæsura, the collocation of substantive and adjective, and the limitation of the sentence to the couplet, were of course easy of imitation, and were therefore copied freely by every uninspired versifier in the eighteenth century. But in Pope these features are the index of original conception: expression with him is 'the dress of thought,' and his diction almost always exhibits the energy of imagination or passion. What other poet ever wrote, or could have written, such couplets as

> "In lazy apathy let stoics boast
> Their virtue fixed; 'tis fixed as in a frost:"

or

> "Yes, I am proud, I must be proud, to see
> Men not afraid of God afraid of me:"

or

> "The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine!
> Feels at each thread, and lives along the line."

In these verses the very soul, spirit, and energy of the man himself shines through. Compare with such writing Cowper's own conversational style in metre, and elegant and, in its own way, admirable as that is, how inferior is it felt to be in all that constitutes movement, life, and general interest!

Still more inexplicable does Cowper's criticism appear, in view of the great variety of harmony that Pope contrived to evoke from a metrical instrument of such limited compass as the heroic couplet. When we reflect that the same hand which described the sylphs in the cordage of Belinda's barge—

> "Transparent forms too fine for mortal sight,
> Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light,
> Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
> Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
> Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies
> Where light disports in ever mingling dyes,
> While every beam new transient colours flings,
> Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings"—

or which wrote that most exquisite couplet on the 'Rape of the Lock'—

> "The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
> From the fair head—for ever and for ever,"

could also depict in the same metre the heroic energy of Sarpedon and the glowing passion of Heloise; could again preserve in unfading colours the portrait of Atticus,

> "Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
> Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;"

and then change once more to the brilliant dialogue of the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' and the 'Epilogue to the Satires,' or to the splendid satiric description of the travelled Dunce—

> "Intrepid then, o'er lands and seas he flew;
> Europe he saw, and Europe saw him too.
> There all thy gifts and graces we display,
> Thou, only thou, directing all our way!
> To where the Seine, obsequious as she runs,
> Pours at great Bourbon's feet her silken sons;
> Or Tyber, now no longer Roman, rolls,
> Vain of Italian arts, Italian souls:
> To happy convents, bosomed deep in vines,
> Where slumber abbots purple as their wines:
> To isles of fragrance, lily-silvered vales,
> Diffusing languor in the panting gales:
> To lands of singing or of dancing slaves,
> Love-whisp'ring woods and lute-resounding waves"—

for those who feel the versatile and sensitive genius which such work implies, it is difficult to deal patiently with the assertion that Pope made poetry 'a mere mechanic art.'

Apart, however, from all contention on this point, it is of the highest interest to trace historically the growth of these two objections, till they swell into the full tide of reaction which set in against the classical school at the commencement of the present century. Warburton's edition of Pope's works published in 1751 perhaps marks the high water-mark of classical taste. Just before, and immediately after, the death of Pope, however, there were not wanting symptoms that the

tide was about to turn. In 1748 Joseph Warton published, in a collection of verses by different hands, a poem called 'The Enthusiast, or the Love of Nature.' According to his biographer this was written in the year 1740, and, accepting this date, it may certainly be regarded as the starting-point of the romantic revival, as it expresses all that love of solitude and that yearning for the spirit of a by-gone age, which are specially associated with the genius of the romantic school of poetry.[1] In 1745 Joseph's younger brother Thomas published a poem called 'The Pleasures of Melancholy,' in which the following lines occur:

"Through Pope's soft song though all the graces breathe,
And happiest art adorn his Attic page;
Yet does my mind with sweeter transport glow,
As at the foot of mossy trunk reclined,
In magic Spenser's wildly warbled song
I see deserted Una wander wide
Through wasteful solitudes and lurid heaths,
Weary, forlorn; than when the fated fair
Upon the bosom bright of silver Thames
Launches in all the lustre of brocade,
Amid the splendours of the laughing Sun."[2]

In the following year was printed a volume of Odes by William Collins, the friend of Joseph and Thomas Warton, in which were these lines:

"I view that oak, the fancied glades among,
By which as Milton lay, his evening ear,
From many a cloud that dropped ethereal dew,
Nigh sphered in heaven, its native strains could hear;
On which that ancient trump he reached was hung:
Thither oft his glory greeting
From Waller's myrtle shades retreating,
With many a vow from Hope's inspiring tongue,
My trembling feet his guiding steps pursue;
In vain—Such bliss to one alone
Of all the sons of soul was known;
And Heaven, and Fancy, kindred powers,
Have now o'erturned th' inspiring bowers;
Or curtained close such scene from every future view."

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[1] Chalmers' 'English Poets,' vol. xviii., p. 145, 'Life of Joseph Warton.'

[2] Chalmers' 'English Poets,' vol. xviii., p. 96.

Joseph Warton, less despondent than his friend, did not hesitate to maintain the necessity of restoring the romantic element to poetry, and in a preface to a volume of his own Odes which were published at the same time as those of Collins, he says:

"As he is convinced that the fashion of moralising in verse has been carried too far, and as he looks upon invention and imagination to be the chief faculties of the poet, so he will be happy if the following odes may be looked upon as an attempt to bring back poetry into its *right channel.*"

Warton had taste but not genius, and his Odes, though they are mentioned by Gray, attracted little notice. Maintaining his principles, however, he produced, in 1756, a volume of criticism which gradually though slowly affected the course of public taste. This was the first volume of his 'Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope,'—a work in which the particular observations were much better than the philosophical principles. Warton announced his object in his Preface:

"I revere the memory of Pope, I respect and honour his abilities; but I do not think him at the head of his profession. In other words, in that species of poetry wherein Pope excelled, he is superior to all mankind: and I only say that this species of poetry is not the most excellent one of the art."

Had he really confined himself to illustrating this indisputable proposition, Warton's criticism would have been beyond reproach. His judgments on Pope's various poems are sound, acute, and liberal, and he concludes his examination with a verdict which ought to satisfy the most jealous admirer of the poet, since it places him 'next to Milton and just above Dryden.' Unfortunately, not satisfied with maintaining that gnomic and satiric poetry must be placed on a lower level than epic and dramatic, he constantly made use of expressions which showed that he did not consider the former class entitled to rank as poetry at all. He quotes sayings from Horace to prove an obvious truth, that the mere use of metre does not make a man a poet. He denudes a passage in the Moral Essays of rhyme to show that its subject-matter is nothing but prose.

He says, "The sublime and the pathetic are the two chief nerves of all *genuine* poesy. What is there very sublime or very pathetic in Pope?" And at the end of his Essay he commits himself to a remarkable fallacy, which, it is interesting to observe, has been adopted by all enemies of Pope from that day to this, and is indeed the source of most of the confusion of thought which has obscured the controversies respecting his poetical merits. Warton says:

"Thus have I endeavoured to give a critical account with freedom, but it is hoped with impartiality, of each of Pope's works, by which review it will appear that the largest portion of them is of the didactic, moral, and satiric kind, and consequently not of the most *poetic* species of poetry; whence it is manifest that good sense and judgment were his characteristical excellences, rather than fancy and invention: not that the author of the 'Rape of the Lock' and 'Eloisa' can be thought to want imagination; but because his imagination was not his predominant talent, because he indulged it not, and because he gave not so many proofs of this talent as of the other."[1]

To say that one species of poetry is more *poetic* than another, is like saying that one species of horse, the race-horse, is more *equine* than the carriage-horse or the hunter. It may be fairly said that a great epic or dramatic poem, as being more imaginative, more pathetic, more sublime, is therefore much more admirable, as a work of poetry, than a fine satire, but to deny (as Warton in effect does) to *good* moral or satiric verse the title of poetry, is to maintain a paradox in the face of common sense and general language. Juvenal and Boileau have written nothing considerable except satiric or ethical verse: instinct and usage nevertheless allow them the name of poet in their own class, though not for one moment ranking such poets in the same class with Homer, Virgil, and Milton.

The controversy was still further developed by Lisle Bowles, Canon of Salisbury, who in 1806 published an edition of Pope's works. A pupil of Joseph Warton at Winchester, and of his brother at Trinity College, Oxford, Bowles had thoroughly imbibed their taste for the romantic element in

[1] 'Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope,' vol. ii. pp. 401, 402.

poetry, and was ambitious to emulate the effect which had been produced by the Essay on Pope. He sought to establish the same conclusion as Warton by a different line of reasoning. In a chapter devoted to the poetical character of Pope he laid down the following propositions:

"All images drawn from what is beautiful or sublime in the works of Nature are more beautiful and sublime than images drawn from art, and *are therefore more poetical.* In like manner, those passions of the human heart, which belong to Nature in general, are, *per se*, more adapted to the higher species of poetry, than those which are derived from incidental and transient manners."[1]

And again:

"The subject and the execution are equally to be considered; the one respecting the *poetry;* the other the art and talents of the poet. With regard to the first, Pope cannot be placed among the highest order of poets: with regard to the second none was ever his superior."[2]

These 'invariable principles of poetry,' as Bowles proudly called them, attracted apparently little attention until, in 1819, Campbell examined and disputed Bowles' estimate of Pope in the preface to his 'Specimens of the British Poets.' Bowles replied to Campbell, Campbell again to Bowles, and the dispute was eventually swelled by Byron, Isaac Disraeli in the 'Quarterly Review,' and a whole host of anonymous writers who rushed in, on one side or the other, on ground which peculiarly required an angelic tread. It was fortunate for Bowles that his adversaries, failing to detect the fundamental fallacy of his propositions, joined battle with him by taking up counter positions of their own which were logically indefensible, and, after some five years of wearisome controversy, left him apparently master of the field. Had they examined his propositions with care, they would have been able to convict him of a flagrant *petitio principii*, for it is obvious that in the former of the two passages cited above he uses the term 'poetical' as if it were identical with 'adapted to the *higher* species of poetry.' But if the mock-heroic, for

[1] Bowles' edition of Pope's Works, vol. x. p. 363. [2] Ibid. pp. 364, 365.

instance, be (as Bowles would have admitted) a genuine order of poetry, it is certain that 'images drawn from what is beautiful and sublime in nature' are not so well adapted to mock-heroic as 'images drawn from art,' and therefore, in respect of this species of composition, may be said to be less poetical. The attempt to reason syllogistically on the respective value of the different orders of poetry was, in fact, almost as absurd as a logomachy to decide whether among fruits a peach is superior to a strawberry. Both sets of combatants were in reality animated by party spirit, rather than by a zeal for abstract truth. Bowles, as the champion of reviving romanticism, wished to find reasons against the supremacy of Pope, whose admirers, on the other hand, were determined to maintain that supremacy, even by arguments which a moment's reflection might have shown to be unsound. Isaac Disraeli, for example, contended that, as Pope had developed the art of his own order to the highest pitch of perfection, he was entitled to rank as a poet 'in the same file' as Milton and Dante,[1] while Byron, with defiant recklessness, proclaimed his belief that Pope's works were better worth preserving than those of Shakespeare and Milton.[2]

Meantime a new idea of Nature in Poetry, closely allied with the romantic conception, had been growing up, which formulated into first principles of art, and expressed by men of remarkable genius, was destined to strike for a period an overwhelming blow against the supremacy of the classical school. The effect of this new idea was to establish a contrast between the inner life of the individual and the life of organised society. It sprang from the operation of two distinct forces. One of these was religious. The Methodist movement, reacting from the coldness of Deism, tended to isolate the individual who was penetrated by sincere religious convictions from the *worldliness* of refined society. Under this

[1] 'Quarterly Review' for Oct., 1820.
[2] Letter on the Rev. W. L. Bowles' 'Strictures on the Life and Writings of Pope,' 1821.

influence men of fine and sensitive imagination sought communion with heaven by filling their minds with the images of rural solitude. Such were the feelings of the author of 'The Task:' 'God made the country but man made the town,' said Cowper. The other constituent element in the new idea of Nature was the philosophy of Rousseau, in which principles, derived from phrases of International Law, were blended with a belief in the virtues of primitive Man, and with an instinctive dislike of the conventions of aristocratic manners. It was not till 1799 that the appearance of Wordsworth's 'Lyrical Ballads' showed how deeply this new philosophy had wrought with men of poetic imagination. A controversy at once arose as to the principles of art on which the poems in this volume appeared to be founded. Wordsworth defended his practice in a Preface to a new edition of his poems published in 1800, and his apology received a partial support from Coleridge in his 'Biographia Literaria,' published in 1817. From these two documents we may therefore gather completely the designs of the new school, and perceive the points at which they were radically opposed to the critical principles of Pope.

Wordsworth lays down in his Preface the two main principles on which his practice is founded. In these we see, on the one hand, the influence of Rousseau's democratic theories, and, on the other, the tendency in the new school to revert to the 'metaphysical' principle of mediæval poetry.

"The principal object, then, proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and *to relate* or *describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men*, and at the same time *to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect.*"

The two main points of difference between the classical and the modern romantic schools are here brought into vivid relief. Pope, the antagonist of the metaphysical school, had taught that the essence of poetry was the presentation, in a perfect form, of imaginative materials common to the poet and the

reader—"What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed." Wordsworth maintained, on the contrary, that matter, not in itself stimulating to the general imagination, might become a proper subject for poetry if glorified by the imagination of the poet. There is an obvious analogy between this method of composition and the wit, or *discordia concors*, which was the aim of the seventeenth century poet. Again, it was Pope's maxim, as the poetical representative of refined society, that, 'Expression was the dress of thought'; and that poetical thought required a peculiar mode of expression, separated from common language by the imaginative nature of the subject and by the necessities of metre. Wordsworth, the poetical representative of the rising democratic movement, insisted that there was no essential difference between the language of metre and that of prose; and that the poetic style in general should be founded in 'language really used by men,' or as he afterwards defined his meaning, by the common language of the peasantry.

Though Wordsworth's Preface is an animated rhetorical treatise, probably few will be found to pretend that it is a good essay in criticism. It was intended primarily to defend his own poetical practice, and in doing this he lays down rules which must govern the whole art of poetry. Nevertheless when confronted with the necessary question, '*What* is a poem?' he answers it merely by determining *who* is the poet. Coleridge, a sounder and deeper critic, who was prepared to support Wordsworth in one at least of his leading propositions, perceived that the problem could not be circumvented in this fashion, and offered a solution of his own. "If," said he, "the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonising with and supporting the known influences of metrical arrangement."[1] This definition is completely satisfactory, but the question then

[1] Coleridge's 'Biographia Literaria,' chapter xiv. (edition of 1817).

arises, what is the basis of this Unity? The practical answer to the question returned by all the greater poets of the world is, The subject of the poem. In every great epic or dramatic poem, the action or fable, in every great lyric poem the passion, is not imagined and discovered by the poet, but is shared by the poet with his audience: the element contributed by the poet singly is the conception and form of the poem. Coleridge on the contrary held with Wordsworth that the Unity of the poem lay solely in the imagination of the poet, and he endeavoured to establish his theory by reference to the Law of Association.

The metaphysics in which he involved his argument may be found in his 'Biographia Literaria,'[1] but for practical purposes the question is, whether he and Wordsworth and their followers were able, on their own principles, to satisfy Coleridge's definition of a legitimate poem. Has it been found possible, taking the purely contemplative mind as the sole standard of poetical unity, to weave the thoughts, feelings, and fancies awakened in it into such a consistent whole as may seem to be an ideal reflection of external Nature? Can any great poem of Wordsworth's school be cited in which the author, having really burnt the bridge of connection between himself and his readers, has yet succeeded in producing a noble poetical effect by "presenting ordinary things to the mind in an unusual aspect?" Neither 'Laodamia' nor the 'Ode on Immortality,' nor any of Wordsworth's finer sonnets are devoid of subject-matter generally intelligible to the imagination; and though he has numerous short suggestive poems containing what may be called an indirect view of Nature, these can hardly be said to fall within Coleridge's definition of a legitimate poem. On the other hand 'The Excursion' and 'The Prelude,' though each is full of fine individual passages, are certainly not poems in which the parts 'mutually support and explain each other,' and they therefore violate the elementary conditions of poetical unity.

[1] See chapters xii., xiii. of 'Biographia Literaria' (edition of 1817).

Take again the most striking work of men of the Romantic school with a finer artistic sense than Wordsworth—Coleridge and Shelley. 'The Ancient Mariner' has neither beginning, middle, nor end: 'Christabel' is a fragment the effect of which would be destroyed by completion: 'Kubla Khan' is confessedly the unconnected imagery of dreamland; all of these poems are in fact simply admirable *tours de force* in metrical music. Shelley who, if imagination was all that was needful for a great poet, would stand, of course, in the highest rank, had a fine sense of what his art required:

> "The experience and feelings to which I refer," says he in the Preface to his 'Revolt of Islam,' "do not in themselves constitute men Poets, but only prepare them to be the auditors of those who are. How far I shall be found to possess that more essential attribute of Poetry, the power of awakening in others sensations like those which animate my own bosom, is that which to speak sincerely I know not; and which with an acquiescent and contented spirit I expect to be taught by the effect which I shall produce upon those whom I now address."

This admirable and modest confession involves an admission of the soundness of Addison's principle that 'art must conform to taste.' But Shelley underrated his own powers of expression. With the exception of Shakespeare, no English poet ever possessed a greater wealth of language or a finer sense of harmony. What he lacked was a general idea of Nature, and a knowledge of the manner in which the great majority of mankind think and feel. Hence the 'Revolt of Islam,' 'Prometheus Unbound,' and the 'Witch of Atlas,' fail in what is most essential to epic and dramatic poems—design, action, manners, character. Shelley formed his idea of Nature and his conception of his subjects in a solitary and purely capricious spirit. Unless the reader is prepared to surrender his own thought and judgment to his author's imagination, and to reason, judge, and believe, for the moment, as the poet would have him, he cannot fail to perceive that, in the poems I have mentioned, the "parts do not mutually support and explain each other."

I turn to Wordsworth's theory with respect to the language of poetry. This is in effect an attack upon the 'poetical diction' which had grown up in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and which Wordsworth and Coleridge agreed in ascribing to the influence of Pope.[1] Their criticisms are, to a very great extent, unjust. Pope's doctrine was that 'expression is the dress of thought.' To express his own thoughts in metre, however, he confined himself almost exclusively to the use of a single instrument, the heroic couplet. As I have already said he varied his style on this instrument, in the most skilful manner, according to the nature of his subject. In his Translation of the 'Iliad,' and in those of his original poems which approach an epical standard, he founded his style on a close imitation of the forms of Latin poetry; but in all his Horatian satires he based it, as far as the laws of metre would allow, on the familiar conversational language of refined society. The versifiers of the eighteenth century who succeeded him, taking no heed of his principle that expression is the dress of thought, looked only to his style, and finding that certain features in his treatment of the heroic couplet were more marked in the Translation of the 'Iliad' than in his satires, they imitated these, without any reference to the nature of their subjects. Even so genuine a poet as Gray was to some extent infected with this vicious habit. We find him for instance in his 'Elegy' sometimes employing otiose epithets; and he introduces into a sonnet such a line as

"And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fires."

This conventional classicalism reached its height in the 'Botanic Garden' of Erasmus Darwin, a poem which in its own day was greatly admired. An absurd and bombastic

[1] Wordsworth in his 'Essay on Poetic Diction'—Prose Works (Grosart), vol. ii. p. 141. Coleridge, in chapter i. of his 'Biographia Literaria' (edition of 1817), pp. 17–18.

manner of writing was thus produced, which has unjustly been labelled as '*the* Pope style.'[1]

Against this spurious poetic diction Wordsworth very rightly protested. By a not unnatural reaction, filled as he was in his younger days with the spirit of Rousseau, he maintained that the right basis for poetical expression was to be found in the language of the peasantry. This part of his theory has had little influence on the course of English poetry. Indeed as Coleridge showed in his 'Biographia Literaria,' Wordsworth's own practice is a complete violation of his principles, for his style, in almost all of his poems, shows signs of the influence of well-known literary models.[2] The effect of Wordsworth's doctrines has rather been to encourage the growth of numerous species of poetic diction fully as artificial as the style which he so vigorously attacked. He would probably have agreed with Pope that 'expression is the dress of thought.' But the poet who separates himself from the active life of society, and seeks solely to render into verse his individual thoughts and emotions, necessarily ceases to feel in his art the influence of the spoken language of his country. The more monastic he keeps his imagination, the more exclusively is he influenced by what he reads, and the more affected he is by ideas of Nature and modes of expression foreign to his own time. Thus the style of the Lake Poets was vastly influenced by the publication of Bishop Percy's 'Specimens of Early English Poetry'; the School of Leigh Hunt and Keats revived the use of the heroic couplet found in the Elizabethan poets; and in our own days poets of eminence have even sought to imitate the external manner of Dante and Chaucer. Accordingly metrical language, instead of being in the first place the reflection of thought, has come to be cultivated as a thing *per se*, and is treated by the poet as if it in no way differed from the vehicles of expres-

[1] See Mr. Leslie Stephen's remarks on this subject in his 'Pope' (Men of Letters Series), pp. 68, 69.

[2] 'Biographia Literaria' (edition of 1817), chapter xviii

sion employed by the painter and the musician. No doubt of poetry were no *more* than metrical music—'the best words in the best order,' as Coleridge called it—the delightfully melodious opening of 'Kubla Khan,'—

> "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
> A stately pleasure-dome decree,
> Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
> Through caverns measureless to man
> Down to a sunless sea"—

would be entitled to rank in the same class as parallel fragments of romantic description in Shakespeare and Milton. But when we remember that, in the noblest poetry, the music is always the servant of the sense, as—

> "The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a wreck behind;"—

then, if sense be an essential part of poetry, even such harmony as is found in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' must be reckoned of a superior order to that kind of metrical writing which, however beautiful as mere music, depends for its effect almost entirely on time and tune.

I have endeavoured in this chapter to establish the following propositions:

(1) That the poetry of Pope, and what is called the classical school of the eighteenth century, was a protest in theory and practice against the fashionable poetry of the seventeenth century.

(2) That the fundamental difference between these two schools lay in this, that the eighteenth-century poets founded their conceptions of the art on a *direct*, but the seventeenth-century poets on a *metaphysical*, view of Nature.

(3) That in the method and spirit of their compositions the eighteenth-century poets reverted to the example of the great

classical poets of antiquity, in opposition to the seventeenth-century poets, who were the lineal descendants of the poets and critics of the middle ages; and that hence the former derived their title of the classical school.

(4) That the romantic school of poetry, which began to rise about the middle of the last century, originated in a reaction against the too limited principles of the classical school, which excluded from its idea of Nature all the elements of romance derived from Catholicism and Feudalism.

(5) That, in their laudable determination to enlarge the area of imaginative conception, the later poets connected with the romantic school formulated principles of criticism, which were not only opposed to the theory and practice of the poets of the eighteenth century, but even fatal to the continued existence of the art as practised by the greatest poets of all times.

Before, however, I say my last word on the place of Pope in English poetry with reference to these conclusions, I ought to consider the opinion on this subject which has been pronounced by a critic of the highest eminence, the late Mr. Matthew Arnold. Mr. Arnold justly earned the thanks of this generation for the soundness of his judgments on questions of taste and for the clearness with which he delivered them. It is not to be denied, however, that his powers of lucid and felicitous expression frequently led him into the dangerous habit of substituting phrases for reasoning; and this tendency is nowhere more manifest than in the Preface which he contributed to Mr. Humphrey Ward's 'English Poets' published in 1880. Containing as this collection did passages from all the English poets from Chaucer to our own time, an inductive rather than an *a priori* view of the course of English poetry seemed to be what was required in the Preface. Mr. Arnold, however, chose, as he was of course at liberty to do, to treat the subject by determining what was absolutely best in poetry, not what was best in its particular orders, and by bringing all the chief representatives

of the art in England to the test of his absolute standard. He defined poetry to be a 'criticism of life'; classic poets to be those who are the best critics of life; the best criticism of life to be that which contains a 'high seriousness,' and is expressed in a manner inseparable from this serious view of things. But as to the nature of this 'high seriousness,' or of the 'manner' inseparable from it, he entirely declined to commit himself to any definition, or to do more than furnish concrete examples of what he meant. Applying this extremely indefinite standard to the school of Dryden and Pope, he pronounced as follows:

"Do you ask me whether such verse proceeds from men with an adequate poetic criticism of life—from men whose criticism of life has a high seriousness—has poetic largeness, freedom, insight, benignity? Do you ask me whether the application of ideas to life in the verse of these men, often a powerful application no doubt, is a powerful *poetic* application? Do you ask me whether the poetry of these men has either the matter, or the inseparable manner of such an adequate poetic criticism? I answer, 'It has not, and cannot have them; it is the poetry of the builders of an age of prose and reason. Though they may write in verse, though they may in a certain sense be masters of the art of versification, Dryden and Pope are not classics of our poetry, they are classics of our prose.'"

It will be manifest, I think, to every reader of this chapter, that Mr. Arnold is here only repeating, in his own manner, the arguments directed against the poetry of Pope by the early critics of the romantic school. I have already endeavoured to show the futility of measuring the value of the different orders of poetry by a uniform standard, and the reasoning of Mr. Arnold seems to me to differ from the reasoning of Warton and Bowles only by being more paradoxical. His propositions are made in direct defiance of common consent and established opinion. Poetry is not, as he says, a criticism (though it involves criticism) but an imitation of Nature. The poet conceives and represents as a whole an imaginative idea, which the critic resolves analytically into its component parts. In what intelligible sense can the 'Iliad,' 'Paradise Lost,' 'Macbeth,' or any poem dependent on the exhibition of action, manners, and character, be called a 'criticism of life'?

Again Mr. Arnold says that 'Dryden and Pope are not classics of our poetry; they are classics of our prose.' He thus allows those writers to be classics; in other words that they have been such successful imitators of Nature, that their works have produced enduring pleasure in good critics of all subsequent generations. Yet, though they are classics, and though the enduring pleasure which they excite comes from their metrical writing, they are declared to be classics of our prose! Surely the force of paradox can no further go.

While the reasoning employed by Mr. Arnold to depreciate the poetry of Pope is not very convincing, there is something extremely suggestive in the conception of poetry which underlies it. His whole argument is a development of the position taken up by Wordsworth in the Preface of 1800, and is, to a great extent, a return to the *metaphysical* idea of poetry prevalent among the critics of the middle ages. Poetry, in Mr. Arnold's opinion, is in future to be a substitute for religion.

"More and more," he says, "mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, and to sustain us . . . . Wordsworth finely and truly calls poetry 'the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge;' our religion parades evidences such as those on which the popular mind relies now; our philosophy plumes itself on reasoning about causation, and finite and infinite being; what are they but the shadows, and dreams, and false shows of knowledge? The day will come when we shall wonder at ourselves for having trusted to them, for having taken them seriously; and the more we perceive their hollowness, the more we shall prize 'the breath and finer spirit of knowledge' offered to us by poetry."

Rather it is certain that if such a day ever does come, poetry will have lost its old character as exhibited in the works of really classical poets. What, for instance, is the character of Homer, the father of epic poetry? "Minute enquiries into the force of words," says Johnson, "are less necessary in translating Homer than other poets, because his positions are general and his representations natural, with very little dependence on local and temporary customs, or those changeable scenes of artificial life which, by mingling

original with accidental notions, and crowding the mind with images which time effaces, produce ambiguity in diction and obscurity in books." What does Shakespeare, the greatest of all modern classics, say about dramatic poetry? "The purpose of playing, whose end both at the first and now was and is to hold as 'twere the *mirror up to nature*, to show Virtue her own feature, Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." Nature may be presented in many shapes and various dresses. She appears in one way in the epic, in another in the drama; she has at one time a tragic at another a comic mood. All of these may be represented in poetry; those are the classic poets who best represent her under the particular aspect they choose; and the classic style in poetry is the style which is best adapted to the nature of the subject. I imagine that Aristophanes, for example, would not have been considered by the Athenians a good poet if he had set himself to ridicule Cleon in a spirit of 'high seriousness.'

Pope was an ethical and satiric poet, but ethical and satirical poetry was what his age needed, and in that order of poetry he is a classic. His place in English poetry is in fact assured. Taking up the work that Dryden had begun, he saved poetry from the swamp in which it was sinking from a too conservative attachment to an obsolete idea of Nature, and to effete modes of composition. He placed it on a new foundation of Nature, corresponding with the general intelligence of his age, and he furnished it with a new ideal of harmonious and correct expression, the effects of which are still felt in the language. As the poet of the Revolution of 1688, his style is characterised by many of the limitations which the temper of the times rendered almost inevitable. But all his best work was done in a spirit well deserving of the name 'classical,' by which his style is generally distinguished. The poets and critics of the Romantic school perceived the undue exclusiveness, or what may be called the poetical Whiggism of the Classical school, its want of feeling for rural nature, its lack of sympathy with the

memories of Catholicism and Feudalism, and with all the corresponding element in old English poetry which we know by the name of romance. This lyrical element they supplied in many poems breathing the genuine spirit of classical antiquity. But, not content with this salutary enlargement of the borders of poetry, the romantic poets separated themselves into a school opposed to the classical poets, in the belief that they had discovered a new opening for their art. Isolating themselves from the ruling society of the time, they sought to make poetry the vehicle for their own special sympathies, rather than to show 'the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.' By a natural consequence the language of poetry ceased to be a *lingua communis*, and parted into a number of dialects, each reflecting the side aspect of nature visible to some particular poet. The special circle in sympathy with the imagination of the poet welcomed with enthusiasm the reflection of its own ideas. But as the art of poetry tended to withdraw itself more and more from the life of the nation as a whole, so the nation as a whole began to grow indifferent to the art of poetry; and a permanent divorce of the parties is now threatened, an incalculable calamity to both. For a nation cannot part from its imagination without parting from its greatness. Nor can the poet dispense with the controlling influence of general taste and feeling without falling into affectations, mannerisms, and conceits.

The time would seem to have come when the respective champions of the classic and romantic schools might well pause for a moment in their warfare to rec[illegible] the amount of their gains and loss[illegible] in politi[illegible]etry, since the Revolution of 168[illegible] [illegible]ons h[illegible] [illegible]bated between two sharply opp[illegible] [illegible]nos[illegible] [illegible]have been re-[illegible]arded as mut[illegible] B[illegible] [illegible]er atmosphere [illegible] the present [illegible] [illegible]hat both sides [illegible]ve their [illegible] [illegible]b[illegible] [illegible]experience can [illegible] made to [illegible] [illegible]es of their art. [illegible] 'Ess[illegible] [illegible]es those heights

of philosophic imagination which are found by the wanderer through the 'Excursion.' On the other hand the 'Excursion' is not, like the 'Essay on Man,' an artistic whole, because it lacks entirely unity of poetic design. Multitudes of brilliant images, beyond the range of Pope's imagination, are to be found in the 'Revolt of Islam;' nevertheless, the 'Rape of the Lock' satisfies Coleridge's definition of a legitimate poem, but the 'Revolt of Islam' does not. In Pope's poetry there is none of that weird and magical melody which transports the imagination in fragments like 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan,' but neither has it those

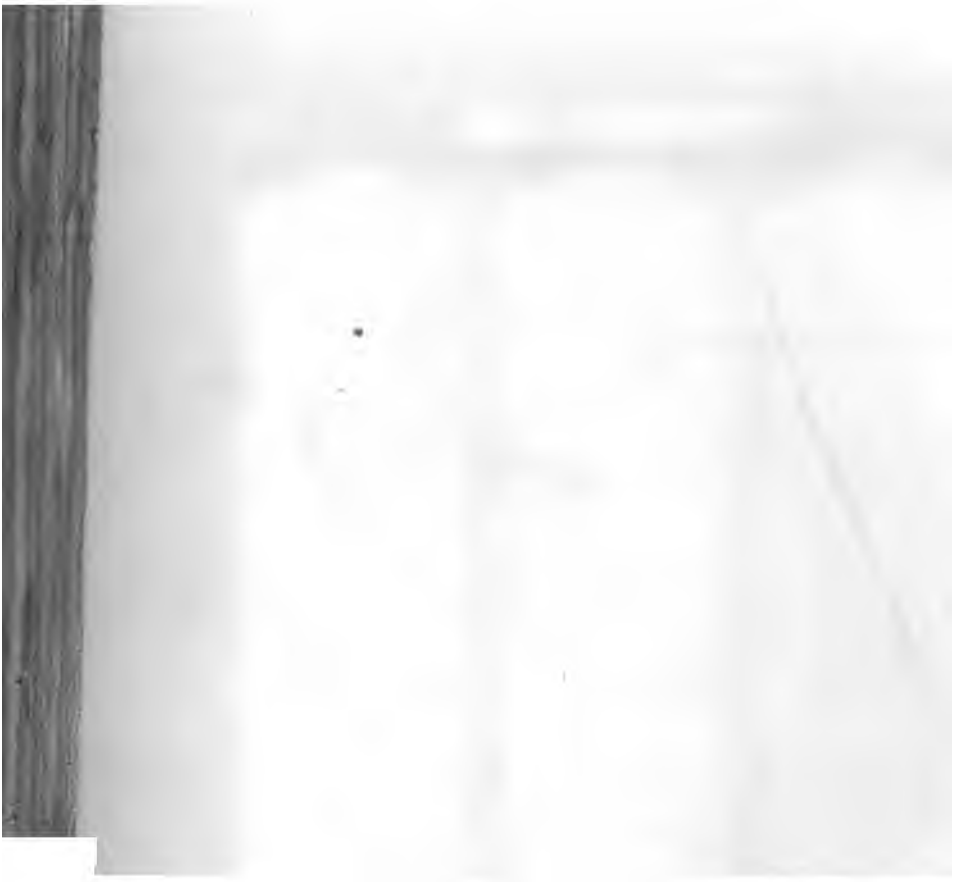
> "Rich windows, that exclude the light,
> And passages that lead to nothing,"—

nor is there, in any extended poem of Coleridge, any single central *idea* forming the basis of harmony as in the 'Epistle to Arbuthnot' or the 'Essay on Man.' We do not find in Pope the gorgeous colouring of language which is the distinguishing feature of 'Lamia' and 'St. Agnes' Eve'; but we equally miss in Keats the clear and forcible portraiture of human nature which gives such interest and animation to the 'Moral Essays.'

The net result, then, of the quarrel between the classical and romantic schools seems to be this: that, in so far as the Lake poets and their successors revolted against the excessive restrictions placed upon the imagination by the misapplication of Pope's critical principles, they were in the right; but that, where they sought to overthrow his method of art, they were in error. This is proved alike by the solid and enduring pleasure produced by Pope's poetical works, and by the failure of the romantic poets, when working exclusively on their own principles, to satisfy the requirements of artistic unity. The main principle that governs Pope's poetical method is that poetry consists in the imitation of Nature. The leading rules that may be gathered from his theory and practice seem to be the following. Poetical conception must be natural: in other

words, whatever subject is chosen must give scope for representing some general idea of Nature in one of the well-established forms of the art of poetry. Execution must be natural; that is to say, all parts of the poem must conspire to reproduce this idea of Nature as a rational and intelligible whole. Language must be natural, in the sense that it must reflect the ideal nature of the subject in metre, without any appearance of mannerism and affectation. Where these conditions are satisfied the poem, whatever be its particular order, will be a good and legitimate poem, and will exemplify the truth of Coleridge's aphorism: "Finally, good sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its drapery, Motion its life, and Imagination the soul that is everywhere and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole."[1]

[1] 'Biographia Literaria' (Edition of 1817), chapter xiv.



APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

LETTERS

FROM

WYCHERLEY TO POPE.[1]

1. *March 22nd*, 1705–6.

My Great Little Friend,—I have Receiv'd yours of the 17th Instant yesterday, being the 21 and your letter was the best and most Wellcome thing I have Receiv'd since I came down, tho' I have receiv'd some Monny. But I must confess, you try my patience (as you say) in the beginning of your Letter; not by the many Lines in it, but the too many Compliments you make me for nothing; in which you prove yourselfe (tho' a sincere Friend) a man of too much fiction; for I have not seen so much Poetry in Prose a great while, since your Letter is filled with so many fine words and acknowledgments of your Obligations to me (the only asseverations of yours I dare contradict) for I must tell you your Letter is like an Author's Epistle before his Book, written more to shew his wit to the World that [than] his Sincerety, or gratitude to his Friend, whom he Libells with Praise, so that you have provok'd my modesty ev'n whilst you have soôth'd my Vanity for I know not whether I am more Complimented than abused; since too much praise turns Irony, as too great thanks for smal favors turns ingratitude, or too much Cerimony in Re-

[1] Transcribed from the MSS. in the possession of the Marquis of Bath at Longleat.

ligion, Hipocricy; but if you woud have commanded my Judgment you should only have sayd you thought me y^r^ true Friend, and if you woud have layd some Wit to my Charge, you must have told me I show'd (att least) some when I intended to submitt all I writ to the infallibility of your Wit, Judgment, and Sensure who are my Pope.

I have had no sort of Pleasure since I came from you, and hardly expect any till I return back to you; which I feare will not be as soon as I hopd, or Immagind; for I have some thoughts of going from hence to the Bath, being advisd to it by Dr. Radcliff when I was at London as likewise by my Doctor here (if I woud be thouroughly well,) but you may be assurd, I will make hast to you, to be better. In the meantime, pray present my humble Service to your Mother and Father, as likewise to that factious young Gentleman Mr. Englefield and tell him, if I come into Berkshire, I will make him hollow as lowd in the Tavern at Reading as he did at the Coffee House in London till he dances wth his own Dayry Mayds.

Pray let me hear from you the only Satisfaction I can have in this place.

[1]Now after all I must lay a peñance upon you which is to desire you to look over that Damnd Miscellany of Madrigals of mine to pick out (if possible) some that may be so alterd that they may yet apeare in print again I hope with better Success than they hitherto have done. I will give you my Reason for this request of mine when I see you which I am resolvd shall be when I have done here and at the Bath where I designe to goe and afterwards to spend two Months (God Willing) with you at Binfield, or near it, or at Epsham, or elsewhere. [In the meantime once more farwell, My Deare Little Infallible.][2]

[1] This paragraph is printed by Pope as if it were an entire letter; but the date of the letter from which it is extracted is correctly given.

[2] The words in [ ] are omitted in the paragraph of the letter published by Pope.

2. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *Novr. the* 11*th*, 1707.

DEAR MR. POPE,—I rece[d] yours of the 9th yesterday; which has, like the rest of your Letters, at once pleas'd and instructed me; so that I can assure you, you can no more write too much to your absent Friends than speak too much to the present; which is a truth that all men own, who have either seen your writings, or heard your discourse,—enough to make others show their Judgment in ceasing to write, or talk, especially to you, or in your Company. However I speak, or write to you, not to please you but myself, since by speaking or writing to you I provoke your Answers, which, whilst they humble me, give me Vanity; tho' I am lessend by you, ev'n when you commend me; since you commend my little Sense, with so much more of yours, that you put me out of countenance, whilst you would keep me in it. So that you have found a Way (against the Custom of you great Wits) to show even a great deal of good nature with a great deal of good Sense. I thank you for the Book you promis'd me. I find you would not only correct my Lines, but my Life, and save me here and hereafter from Damnation. Now as to the Damn'd verses you say I intrusted you with, I hope you will let them undergo your Purgatory, to save them from other People's damning them, since the Criticks who are generally the first damn'd in this Life, like the damn'd below, never leave to bring those above them under their damn'd Circumstances; [1][whose works having suffer'd the Flames themselves, will have those of all others share their Fates; for their presumption in seeking their Immortality, which themselves, by pretending too much to it, the sooner miss'd.

I am sorry your Father is averse to your coming to Town at this time, when ev'ry Body of the two Nations, almost, are in it, and there is likely to be so much Comedy acted by the two great Play-Houses of the Nation, the House of Lords, and that of the Commons; that methinks all People should come

[1] The passages in [ ] are omitted in the letter as published by Pope.

to Town but for their diversion,[1] but I fear my Company has given you a Surfit of it; wherefore, when my man returns from the Country, I hope to come to yours, which will be within a fortnight at farthest. In the meantime] I beg you to peruse my [damn'd] Papers, and select what you think best, or most tollerable. Look over them again, for I resolve suddenly to print some of them, who, like a harden'd old Gamster, will (in spight of all former ill usage by Fortune) push on an ill hand in expectation of recovering himself, especially since I have such a Croupier, or second to stand by me, as Mr. Pope, [the Infallible; who shall have with me the Pow'r of the tother Infallible, to damn or save us by our works, as t'other Infallible of Rome; since I believe in your Infallibility who am (Dear Mr. Pope) your obliged real Poetick penitent and humble Servant.

My service pray to your Good Father and Mother, and let me beg of you to use my Follies with unmerciful kindness.

Mr. Cromwel is your humble Servant as he tells me.]

3. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *Decemr. the 6th*, 1707.

DEAR MR. POPE,—I have reced yours of the 29th of Novem[r] which has so much overpaid mine in kindness that, (as Voiture says) I doubt whether the best Effects of those fine expressions of Friendship to me can be more obligeing than they themselves: and for my humility you talk of you have lessen'd, while you magnify it, as, by commending my good Nature with so much more of yours, you have made me almost incapable of being grateful to you: for you have said so many kind things of me, you have left me hardly anything of the same kind to return you; and the best actions are not capable of making you amends for so many good words you have given me; by which you justly magnify them, and yourself, by saying they are Sincere,—so that you have obliged me to be vain rather than not think you a Plain-dealer.[2]

[1] The substance of this paragraph was inserted by Pope in the published letter of Wycherley, dated Nov. 5, 1705.

[2] This description of Pope's letter of November 29th, does not at all tally with the letter of that date published by himself.

Thus (ev'n against your own Opinion) your freedom with me proves not you a Fool, but me so, especially if I cou'd think half the good, you say of me, my due.

As for the Good Book you sent me, I took it as kindly as the Reprimand from the Good Man (which I think you heard) and was that I should not stand in my own light; which was spoken with the Zeal and Simplicity of a Prophet; so that he will much sooner work my Salvation than all the Doctrines or Examples of our new Inspir'd Prophets, Three of which lately (I mean of the French Prophets) stood on the Pillory by Order of the Chief Justice, and our English Prophets are threaten'd with the same Usage, if they persist in their Enthusiastick Doctrines, to the deluding the People. * * * For Agitation is now the word; because they work out their Damnation here, with fear and trembling as the Quakers did formerly; and they are seised with a Spiritual Ague, which turns to such a Feaver in their Brains, that they are hot-headed to the degree of Fanatical Prophecy; and so great a Faith that 'tis said they believe themselves what they say; and pretend to working Miracles also as indeed (I think) they may, (to one at least) since they have made a Physician a believer, (one Doct^r Bifield, famous for his Salvolatile Otiosum) who is now as spiritually mad as the rest, beyond the cure of his own Helibore, for he preaches in the stile of his Bretheren, and to the Coffee-houses; ev'n to the present Scribes and Pharisees; the Lawyers and Parsons who frequent them. In fine as the new Prophets talk to the whole Town, they are the present talk of the whole Town, and are pretty numerous already; nay, they say are like to encrease, for the great Lawyers intend to persecute them and whip them; and you know, Sanguis Martyrum est semen Ecclesiæ.

I expect my Man's return from Shropshire this day, and if he comes I will soon after be with you, who am not easy in your absence, because I am (My Dear Friend) Your real true Friend, and humble Servant.

Soft Cromwell salutes you, and eek
Poetical, drunken Tom Cheek.

4. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

SHREWSBURY, *Jany.* 19*th*, 1707–8.

MY DEAR MR. POPE,—I have received your most extream kind and entertaining Letter, written upon New Year's Day, and I must confess was the best New Years Gift I receivd this Yeare, tho' some of my Tennants brought me that Day some Monny, but your Letter yet was more wellcome to me, like other acceptable Presents as it was more Copious and bountfull which is no wonder, for you were never a Niggard of your Wit. I must confess my Journy (as you apprehend) was very Tedious to me, by reason of the season, but it was yet more insupportable because every day it encreased the distance betwixt you and me; but necessity (which made the old Mare to trot) made me the old Gelding jogg down into Shropshire, having two Farmes of some Concidderable Rents thrown upp into my hands which might have benn unlet, (for ought I know) for this whole Yeare following, had I not come down, nor had I stayd above, woud my Tennants have come down with the Ready. These were the reasons made me defer the most pleasent Journy to me, that which woud have brought me to you, but I am in hopes of this advantage by it that when I get once again to you I shall have the less reason or cause to leave you, and the longer time of enjoying your agreable Conversation, the thoughts of which make me bear our present Seperation the better, or the Damnd Conversation I meet with here, and the rather because you have kept up my Spirits by your kind ingenious Letters which found me in the Country at an honest Gentleman's house, with whom I made an end of the old Yeare, and began the new one, which is the reason your Letter has been so long unanswerd, I haveing been theise four Days out of Shrewsbury.

Now, S^{r}, tho your Letter has brought me a great deal of Satisfaction

Yet my Dear little Friend (as wise men say) there is no happiness without alay.

Since your Letter tells me you are forcd to keep your Chamber upon so melloncolly an Occasion as that of your [illegible]t being so Obscurd that you are deprivd of the Conver-

sation you delight so much in (in your Solitude) that of Books the Consideration of which makes me as mellencolly here for the Misfortune of your eyes as for that of my own being deprived of the sight of the Sun or of the sight of you, but your Eyes I suppose know when they have read enough, tho you do not; therefore pray look to your Eyes, because the [they] usd to look so kindly on me, and do not loose your sight in reading to mend your inward decerning at the expence of your outward, since you may spoyle your Eye Sight and make it become weak or dark, but you can hardly emprove your reason's insight which can never fail you, wherefore you may better bear the weakness of your outward sight, since it is recompenc'd by the strength of your imagination and inward penitration as your Poetick Forefathers were from Homer to Milton. But pray (my Dear Friend) take care of your Eyes, and do not read so much as you doe (since you have learned enough) and that I may not be the Occasion (whilst I advise the preservation of your Eyes) to weaken them (more in vain) by making them read a longer or more tedious Letter I conclude it, in assuring you I will make all the hast I can to you, and hope within a Month to come nearer my two best and brightest Friends, you and the Sun, for I am sure I cannot longer bear being at this distance from either of you. In the meantime pray give my humble Service to your good Father and Mother and take my advice rather to venter loosing your Eyes by gazeing on the fair Shepherdesses of your plains, than by poreing on the Fayrest Impressions of your Authors, which may blind your sight, but scarcely can more emprove your inward decerning. Therefore pray be rather blind for Love than Knowledge, but if you will be quite blind any way I will be your Dog to lead you who every other way woud follow you to serve you and myself because I am (My Dear Little Great Friend) your most assured Friend and Unalterable Humble Servant.

My humble Servis (pray) to your Good Father and Mother; wishing them, as you, a happy new Yeare, and many more; you may be sure I will make hast to you. My Servise likewise pray to that Catholick Whigg, Mr. Englefield.

5. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *Novr. the* 13*th*, 1708.

MY DEAR MR. POPE,—I came to Town upon Saturday night last, the 6th of this month, and I assure you the best part of my welcome to Town was your ingenious, kind Letter, another of which I was so happy as to receive at Shrewsbury, to which (I confess) I made no answer, since I intended my return for London in some few days after; but I am to beg your Pardon, for not answering sooner your last obliging Letter of the 7th of this month, which I reced since I came to town, by which I find neither Time nor distance can allay or alter your Friendship; for which I think myself not a little obliged to you, as likewise I find by a letter of yours to Mr. Cromwell (which he shew'd me) wherein you make so kind a mention of me, that it were ungrateful in me to doubt, (tho I little deserve it,) what you say; no more than your warmth, and reallity of your Friendship, in spight of absence or Distance, which I value myself much upon, and the more, because you seem jealous in your last of mine, for I think no more in Friendship than in Love can any man be jealous without either; so that I am proud of your Quarrel and reproach for not writing to you oftener, or being capable of forgeting you; but to allay the satisfaction I reced by your Letter to me, as by that of yours to Mr. Cromwell, you tell me you have been troubled this Month with the Head-ach, for which I am heartily sorry, that that which gives us so much Pleasure (with so much ease) should give you so much Pain; but if your head has ask'd it, it is but just it should, for its jealousy of me and my Friendship, for not answering sooner your Letters. You and Voiture say, the Woods and Rocks reply; and ev'n the Gods (some say) answer'd (by their Oracles) every dull Pray'r or Praise of them, at whate'er distance it did come to them; so that I confess ev'ry Friend shou'd ev'ry way answer all his Friends' Kindness, and Expectations (if he cou'd). Therefore no Elivation or Rise, (tho upon the Welch Mountains or at Court) cou'd make me above answering my Friends, especially since my Answers to you wou'd procure

yours to me again, which I shou'd value more than my Lord Treasurer's, nay the Queen's to my Petitions as a Poet, in formâ Pauperis. But so much for answering. And now for questioning awhile; in the first place I desire to know when you will come to Town to make Titcombe and me bear the Prince's departure from this Life the better,[1] for which the whole Town is going to be sad, as far as black cloth and Crape or muslin will shew their sorrow; for I believe the Truest Mourners are the Silkmen, the Lacemen, the Embroiderers, and Players, who (they say) must shut up their Shops for these Six Months; so consequently be the Greatest and Truest Mourners for the Prince's Death; nay Titcombe himself is now a sader Fellow than ever, so that the only way to relieve the general sadness here is, for you to come to Town, in order to which I can heartily assure and ensure your welcome to me for the Chamber next mine is Empty and Mrs. Bambro's Table is now no more full of Guests than Meat, so that, if you can think of coming to Town you are sure to be welcome to everybody here that knows you, but more especially to (Dear Mr. Pope) your real friend and humble servt.

In the meantime, pray give my humble service to your Good Father and Mother, and I beg you to make my Compliment to that most Ingenious, humane, most honourable, and most Learned Gentleman, Sr Wm Trumbold.

I thank you for the Friendship as well as the Wit of your Epigram, which I cou'd praise more were it less to my own Praise.

6. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *Feb. the 19th*, 1708–9.[2]

[3][DEAR MR. POPE,]—I have reced yours of the 6th as kind as it is ingenious for which therefor I most heartily thank you: [but] it would have been much more welcome to me, had it not informed me of your want of Health, [which I am sorry for who

[1] Prince George of Denmark died October 28, 1708.

[2] Dated in Pope's version, February 19, 1706–7.

[3] The passages in [ ] are not included in the letter published by Pope.

have underwent likewise (of late) a great deal of Sickness and trouble from the Collick, since your leaving the Town, tho', I thank God, at present I am pretty well recover'd, if I can keep of (off) the Common Foe, the Cold, and shall be contented to want the Philosophy sickness may teach a Man, to be a good harden'd Blockhead with Health, without Thought, or Sense.] But you, who have a mind so vigorous, may well be contented with its crazy habitation since (you know) the old Simmillitude says, the keeness of the Mind soonest wears out the Body, as the sharpest Sword soonest destroys the Scabbard; so that, (as I say,) you must be satisfy'd with your apprehension of an Uneasy Life, (tho I hope not a short one,) notwithstanding that generally you sound Wits (tho' weak Bodys,) are immortal hereafter, by that Genius, which shortens your present Life, to prolong that of the Future. But I yet hope your great, vigorous, and active Mind, will not be able to destroy your little, tender, and crazy Carcase.

Now to say something to what you writ, concerning the present epidemick distemper of the Mind and Age call'd Callumny, I know it is no more to be avoided, (at one time or another of our Lives,) than a Feaver, or an Ague, and as often those Distempers attend, or threaten, the best Constitutions from the worst Aire, so does that malignant Aire of Calumny soonest attack the Sound and Elivated in Mind, as storms the tallest and most fruitful Trees, whilst the low and weak (for bowing and moving to and fro) are by their weakness secure from the Danger and violence of the Tempest [they undergo]. But so much for stinking Rumour, which weakest minds are most afraid of, * * * *. [Wherefore I have (from my long experience of the World) learnt to be slow to believe, as to Anger, who, rather than be unjust to my Friend, by sensureing his Faith too soon, wou'd be treacherous to myself for believing my Foes want of Faith to me, too late: but so much for fear or doubt of Friendship, which may be as much a signe of it as Jealousy is of Love. Now next to preserving me in your Opinion of my real Friendship to you, I take it not a little kindly, that you do what you can to preserve me in Sr Wm Trumbold's good opinion, and to that end pray continue to assure him, that no man is more his humble servant, than he

who is likewise yours by the names of the plain-dealer and WM. WYCHERLEY.

SR,—Since my writing this I rec^{ed} yours of the 15th, which is a second part to your Former, in relation to your concern for my seeming to take anything ill of you; but you will (I hope) pardon the crime which my Kindness and Friendship for you is guilty of; for when our Love is indifferent our resentments are so; and if a Man did not value his Friend's Kindness, he wou'd not fear the loss of it. You desire me to let you know, when the Miscellany comes out, wherein you are concern'd. I can only tell you that the other night Captn Steel who writes the Gazzett (and is consequently conversent with Tonson,) told me the Miscellany would not come out this three weeks yet; so you hav a pretty long Reprieve. In the meantime my hearty service to your good Father and Mother, whilst your Allys and Friends of the Coffee-house, Titcombe the rough, and Cromwell the gentle, send you theirs; the one swearing (by God) you are a pretty Fellow, and t'other (by God) that you are are a polite Person, &c.]

7. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *May the 17th*, 1709.

[1][DEAR MR. POPE,—I have had your last which, as all the rest of your Letters, is as ingenious as it is Kind, and which, I find lately, came by the hands of your Mother, whom I shou'd certainly have waited upon, had not the Maid of the House forgotten (till two days after,) to tell me, who it was left the Letter for me, at my Lodgings. If you have not heard from me lately so frequently as I us'd to write, I must needs tell you the reason; I have had a very odd Accident befall me. Upon Friday was fortnight, or rather Saturday morning the last of April, when I went to, and came from, the Painters' Tavern, with one Mr. Balam, who, being something drunker than I (because he thought himself sober) wou'd needs lead me down stairs; which I refused, and therefore went

[1] The passages in [ ] are not included in the letter published by Pope.

down very well, but at the steps going into the street, he turn'd short upon me to help me again from falling, and so procur'd my Fall; for Balam turning back upon the Ass, not the Ass upon Balam, he fell upon me, and threw me backward, with his Elbow in my Stomach, and the Hilt of his Sword in my Eye, bruis'd me so sorely I was forc'd to keep my Bed for two Days, with a great pain in my Side, which by the help of Surgeons, is but lately gone, so that I have been almost a Fortnight in pain, and that's the reason you have not heard from me; which (I suppose) made you imagine I was gone into Shropshire; but I shall not go till this day come seavennight, being the 24th of this Month, when I must be forced to goe, and make a stay in the Country for about a Month, or six weeks, (at farthest), when I shall return again (God willing) to London, and then, keep my word better than I have yet done with you, in visiting you at Binfield, to redeem the credit of my word with you (if possible) and enjoy with you the remainder of the Sumer, in your plaines, where, by your company, the male Rusticks are civilized, as the Female made incivil, to show their better breeding.

In the meantime] I must thank you for a Book of your Miscellanies which Tonson sent me, I suppose by your Order; and all I can tell you of it is, that nothing has lately been better reced by the Publick than your part of it; so that you have only displeas'd the Criticks by your pleasing them too well; having not left them a word to say for themselves against you and your ingenious Performances; so that now your Hand is in you must persever till my Prophesys of you be fulfill'd. In earnest all the best Judges of good Sense or good Poetry are admirers of yours; and like your part of the Book so well, that the rest is lik'd the worse; this is true, (upon my word,) without Compliment; so that the first success will make you for all your Life a Poet, in spight of your Wit; for a Poet's success at first, like a Gamester's fortune at first, is like to make him a Lover at last, and so to be undone by his good fortune and merit, by being drawn to farther adventures of his future credit by his first success.

But hitherto your Miscellanys have safely run the Gantlet through all the Coffee-houses, which are now entertained with

a whimsical new Newspaper call'd the Tatler which I suppose you have seen, [and is written by one Steel, who thinks himself sharp upon this Iron Age, since an Age of War, and who likewise writes the other Gazetts, and this under the name of Bickerstaff.] So this is the newest thing I can tell you of, except it be of the Peace, which now (most People say) is drawing to such a Conclusion, as all Europe is, or must be satisfy'd with, so Poverty (you see) which makes Peace in Westminster Hall, makes it likewise in the Camp or Field through the World. So peace be to you and to me who am grown Peaceful now [with my Dagger, as well as with my Sword, and to keep my honour, will neither venture it now with man or Woman,] and will have no contest with any Man, but him who says he is more your Friend or humble Servant, than your,

[You shall hear from me out of Shropshire. In the meantime pray present my humble service to your good Father and Mother, and to Sr Wm Trumbold.]

8. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *May the 23rd*, 1709.

DEAR MR. POPE,—I writ to you last week, to let you know my intention of leaving the Town this; and accordingly I begin my Journey towards Shropshire tomorrow; where (as I told you) I intend my stay shall not be above a month, to rob the country and then run out of it as fast as I can, (as other Thieves doe) that I may the sooner come to you and your Country; for you shall find (strainge as you may think it) that I can at last keep my word, tho' I am long about it. I was extreamly concern'd (as I told you in my last,) that I miss'd waiting upon your good Mother, when she was in Town. I have now no news to send you, but of the Peace of which so many various things are said, that I think it to no purpose to send you the Particulers, which will soon be communicated to you by the Tatler, Mr. Steel, in his Gazett. In the meantime all that I can observe to you is, Fortune (like all

other Jilts) leaves those in their Age, who were her Favourites in their Youth; which truth I myself, (as unworthy as I am,) have experienc'd sufficiently, as well as Lewis the Grand (now the Petit). However, far be it from me to lessen by (by any impertinent popular Reflextion,) so great a Prince, who, like his Devise, the Sun, from having been all the first part of his days in Glory, may set at last in a Cloud, but let his declention or going down be what it will, he will leave behind him Our Lady the Moon, and abundance of Confederate twinklers (call'd Starrs of the first magnitude) but to outshine him by his own borrow'd light. But I must confess, for the Sun to be eclips'd by a Holland Cheese wou'd have vex'd Lewis the Saint as well as Lewis the Great. But so much for news and politick or moral Reflections, and to return to my promise of making myself happy in your Company at Binfield; be assur'd that about six weeks hence (at farthest) I will beat up your Quarters there, and disturb your private Enjoyments, both of your Muse and your Mistress, as most of the old impotent Fumblers do where they can no more have the Enjoyment of either of their own; and then I have promis'd Mr. Englefield to ride behind you upon your domestick Pegasus, to wait upon him at his Enchanted Castle, tho' he no more believes it than perhaps you may; but look to't. I'll do't I'll do't, as surely as I have been hitherto, (Dear Mr. Pope) your promissing Friend, tho' Poetical, that is lying, humble Servant.

In the meantime my humble service (pray) to your good Father and Mother and my good honourable and ingenious Patron, Sr Wm Trumbold.

9. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *June the 4th*, 1709.

MY DEAR MR. POPE,—I reced yesterday your last Letter with the wonted satisfaction yours use to bring to me, yet I must confess my satisfaction was not without some allay, since your letter likewise brings me the ill news of your

wonted Indisposition, which is very hard for you that that part of you (your Head) which gives others so much pleasure should cause you so much pain; which yet (I believe) might be eased by another pain that of your heart; as the pain of the Head is not felt when the Foot is seiz'd with that of the Gout; so that if you would be heartily in Love and take the Remedy for both pains upon one of your Binfield Nymphs you wou'd be rid of them.

Now, Sr, to answer your kind quarel to me for not seeing you at Binfield yet, I assure you I have been these five weeks (since my Fall by Balam) troubled with an akeing side, and the Consequences of it retarded my Journey into Shropshire, and must have prevented my Journey to Binfield; for I was some time under the Surgeon's hands, and it is not long since I have been totally rid of the pain of my side, who thought at this age I shou'd never more have had pain there.

I intend (God willing) to go for Shropshire upon this Day Sev'nnight, where a Month will be the longest Time of my Stay, and then you shall see whether I can keep my Word, or no, with you at Binfield. In the meantime I beg you to believe that I never made a promise yet to any Man, but with an Intention of performing it, tho I believe you think I never make my Promises to Men but only with intention to break them; yet (you may believe me) I seldom break my Promises to my Friends which wou'd deprive me of my pleasure, no more than I shou'd have fail'd formerly an Assignation with my She-Friends whereby I shou'd have been the greatest Looser.

I find by your Letter to Mr. Cromwell you have dispos'd of the Sappho (you promis'd me) to him, so that you have a mind to give me Jealously [Jealousy], but it is rather of your Friendship than of the Love of your Sappho, since he refus'd to let me see your last Letter to him, who wou'd be a Lover or a Friend by his rude civil cerimony, too much for Woman or Man to bear, so that I dare swear your Ladys (his acquaintance) whom you desire him to salute in your Name are Irishwomen, by their Intimacy with and Friendship for him, more than their Names, otherways his hard Face would render inefectual all the soft things he cou'd say to them in praise of

theirs; who never discommends anything and is only a Satyr in his Face not in his Tongue, and like the Devil Tempts the living Eves to Sin most by his creeping advances, clinging embraces, since the more he bows and creeps to them, the less they see his Face, which like the Devil's were enough to frighten them from what his tempting Tongue wou'd perswade them to. Thus he is damn'd to perpetual Flames of Love here without hopes of his Fool's Paradice in Love; yet like the Devil is still tempting Women to his Love to the Augmentation of their Persecution and his despare. All this I say a little pevishly of him because he wou'd not let me see your Letter; but so much for Him who looks like a Devil, loves like a Tormentor, and damns like a Critick, because he is damn'd himself. But so much for him, you, and me, who am, in spight of the Devil and lying (as a Poet or Courtier), Your real Friend and humble Servt.

My humble service pray, as formerly, give to your good Father and Mother and good Sr Wm.

Upon the word of a Plain-dealer I never saw two such good letters upon such bad subjects, Mr. Cromwel and myself; and for my Credit as much as yours I have a good mind to use you as Dennis did me, and print your Letters, the only way for me to print anything to oblige the World.

10. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *Feb. the 14th*, 1710.

DEAR MR. POPE,—I must needs tell you in the Stile of the wise Recorder of London, who told King James, after the death of King Charles, he came to him with sorrow in one hand, and grief in t'other (tho' he meant Joy), so your Letter brings me sorrow in one sense and joy in another; sorrow for your indisposition, and joy that it will not hinder you from coming to Town. In the meantime I am not a little concern'd that that Head which gives your Friends so much pleasure, shou'd give you so much pain; but since it gives you no pain in pleasing the World with its Productions you must be con-

tented with some pain it gives you otherways. Most things which are most delightful and pleasant give the owners of them most Pain, so that we must take one with t'other. The most pregnant Womb is often most vex'd; the most productive and fruitful Soyl is most plow'd and tourn [torn] up; so that there is no advantage or pleasure without Labour or Pains. No drunkenness which gives Joy to the Head and Heart over-night, but gives sorrow and pain to both the next morning. So that you see by less'ning one's sense as well as improving it the Head must suffer some pain. Thus if pain must be the Concomitant of Pleasure, you must not wonder that your Head, which thinks and writes without Pains (to give us Pleasure) shou'd give you otherways so much pains. Wherefore come to Town, and will make your Head ake for something. Therefore bear the Head-ach heroically (which you suffer by too much Studdy) and which will be so far from short'ning your Life, that it will give you Immortality, since your Head (Mr. Pope) like the Head of the Church can save or damn any of your Followers, and their ill works by the Supererogation of your good works, good example, and infallable Judgment, that is by your Approbation or Sensure, but I am afraid my Damn'd Works cannot be sav'd otherways than by Fire without you lend your Ayd, (Mr. Pope,) to their Salvation and mine by giveing them your plenary Indulgence, and me, who am an implicit believer in your Power and the Infallibility of your Judgment, consequently, your humble Servant.

My humble service pray, to your good Father and Mother. I will endeavour to waite upon Sr Wm Trumbold before he goes out of Town.

11. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *April the* 1*st*, 1710.

MY DEAR MR. POPE,—I have had yours of the 30th of the last Month, which is kinder than I desire it shou'd be, since it tells me you wou'd be better pleas'd to be sick again

in Town, in my Company, than to be well in the Country without it; and that you are more impatient to be depriv'd of Happiness than of health. [Very fine, Mr. Pope, by Gad (as Bays wou'd say;)][1] yet my dear Friend set Railery or Compliment aside, I can bear your absence (which procures your Health and Ease) better than I can your Company when you are in pain; for I cannot see you so without being so too. Your love to the Country I do not doubt; nor do you (I hope) my love to it, or you; since there I can enjoy your Company without seeing you in pain to give me Satisfaction and Pleasure. There I can have you without Rivals or Disturbers; without the Cromwells too civil or the Titcombs too rude; without the noise of the Loud, and the sensure of the Silent; and wou'd rather have you abuse me there with the Truth than at this distance with your Compliment, since now your business of a Friend and kindness to a Friend is by finding fault with his faults and mending them by your oblidging severity to them: wherefore I hope (in spight of your good nature) you will have no cruel Charity for those Papers of mine you were so willing to be troubled with, which I take most infinitly kindly of you, and shall acknowledge with gratitude as long as I live, since no Friend can do more for his Friend than preserving his Reputation (nay, not by preserving his Life) since by preserving his Life, he can only make him live about threescore or fourscore years, but by preserving his Reputation he can make him live as long as the World lasts; so [give him Immortality here, and] save him from damning when he is gone to the Devil. Wherefore pray condemn me in private, as the Thieves do their accomplices in Newgate, to save them from condemnation by the Publick: [therefore I hope you will] be most kindly unmerciful to my poetical Faults, and do with my Papers as you Country Gentlemen do with your Trees, slash, cut, and lopp off the excressness and dead parts of my wither'd Bays, that the little Remainder may live the longer; and [burn the bulk of my writings to] encrease the value of them by diminishing the number [of them, as the Dutch burn three parts of their spices (from the

[1] The passages in [ ] are not included in the letter published by Pope.

Indies) to add to the value of the Remainder; so to magnify their price by lessening their Store.]

I have troubled you with my Papers, rather to give you pains than Pleasure, notwithstanding your Compliment, which says you take that trouble kindly. Such is your generosity to your Friends that you take it kindly to be desir'd by them to do them a Kindness, and think it done to you when they give you an opportunity to do it to Them; wherefore you may be sure to be troubled with my Letters, out of Interest if not kindness, since mine to you will procure yours to me, so that I write to you more for my own sake than yours, less to make you think I write well than to learn from you to write better. Thus you see Interest in my kindness which is like the Friendship of the World rather to make a Friend than be a Friend. But I am yours, [not][1] as [a feigning lying Poet, but] a true plain Dealer [(especially) when I tell you I am, (my Dear Mr. Pope) your most obliged Friend, and real humble Servant.

Pray let me hear from you before I go out of Town, which may be yet ten days or there abouts.

My humble service to your good Father and Mother, and to that most Ingenious and honourable Gentleman, good Sr Wm Trumbold. In the meantime I shall be sure to make your Compliment to Cromwell the gentle, and to the rest of the Coffee-house Vertuosos, who are Statesmen and no Politicians · Sensurers and no Criticks; Poets and no Wits.]

12. WYCHERLEY TO POPE.

LONDON, *April the 27th*, 1710.

[MY DEAR MR. POPE,—I answer'd yours of the 15th (which I think was the last I had from you) about three days after my receiving it; but having not yet receiv'd any answer to it from you, I doubt your old pain of the head-ach has prevented it, which gives me a great deal of concern for you, insomuch

[1] The passages in [ ] are not included in the letter published by Pope.

that I have had thoughts of making you a Visit before my Journey into Shropshire, which has been delay'd by delays and disappointments to me out of the Country.]

You give me an account in your Letter of the trouble you have undergone for me in compareing my Papers you took down with you with the old printed Volume, and with one another of that Bundle you have in your Hands; amongst which (you say) you find numerous repetitions of the same thoughts, and subjects; all which I muste confess my want of memory has prevented me from imagining, as well as commiting them; since of all Figures that of Tautologie is the last I would use, or least forgive myself for; but seeing is believing; wherefore I will take some pains to examine and compare those Papers in your hands, with one another as well as with the former printed Coppy or Book of my damn'd Miscellanys, all which, (as bad a memory as I have,) with a little more pains and care, I think I can remedy. Wherefore I wou'd not have you give yourself more trouble about them, which may prevent the pleasure you have and may give the World in writing upon new Subjects of your Own, whereby you will much better entertain yourself and the World. Now as to your remarks upon the whole Volume of my Papers; all that I desire of you is to mark in the Margent, (without defaceing the Coppy at all,) either any Repetition of words, matter, or sense, or any thoughts, or words too much repeated, which if you will be so kind as to form you will supply my want of memory with your good one, and any deficience of sense, with the infalibility of yours, which, if you will do, you will most infinitely oblige me, who almost repent the trouble I have given you, since so much. Now, as to what you call freedom with me, (which you desire me to forgive you;) you may be assured I would not forgive you unless you did use it with me, for I am so far from thinking your plainness a fault, or an offence to me that I think it a Charity and an obligation, which I shall always acknowledge with all sort of gratitude to you for it, who am therefore (Dear Mr Pope,) Your most obliged humble Servant.

All the news I have to send you is that poor Mr Betterton

is going to make his Exit from the Stage of this World, the Gout being gotten up into his Head, and (as the Physicians say) will certainly carry him of (off) suddenly.

[My most humble service pray to Sr Wm Trombold, and your good Father and Mother, whilst I can assure you from hence all the world here are your Servants and Friends.

I know not but I may see you very suddenly at Binfield after all my broken promisses.][1]

[1] It will probably be inferred by any reader who studies this correspondence, that those professed letters of Wycherley published by Pope which have no original voucher were concoctions of the poet. He imitates in them Wycherley's 'conceited' style, but he makes it much less laboured and obscure than it appears in the letters as actually written. His object was to preserve as much of the correspondence as exhibited him, while little more than a boy, acting as critic to a man so distinguished and advanced in years as Wycherley, and having made his extracts he gave them such an ideal setting as might place the whole situation in the light most advantageous to his own reputation.

APPENDIX II.

LETTERS

FROM

POPE TO SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

REPRINTED FROM THE EIGHTH REPORT OF THE HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS COMMISSION.

I HAVE arranged these letters, which are inserted in the Report of the Commission without any particular order, according to such internal evidence of date as they contain. Wherever Hooke's name is mentioned the date of the letter must lie between January, 1741, and February, 1742, as the Duchess did not make his acquaintance till after the former date, and quarrelled with him before the latter. Again it is evident that the letter dated "January 18th, London" (number 14) must have been written in a later year than that dated "January 19, Twitnam" (number 11), since both must have been written after 1741; and No. 11 obviously refers to the flutter among the Opposition caused by the approaching downfall of Walpole heralded by his loss of the Westminster Election in December, 1741, and by the decision of the House of Commons against the Court in the Berwick Election on January 19 (the date of Pope's letter), 1742. Assuming that the letters have been arranged with approximate correctness, we see that in 1741 Pope was actively and zealously engaged in endeavouring to procure for the Duchess the help of Hooke for the publication of her apology which the latter eventually prepared for her under the title of the 'Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough.' In 1742 the Duchess, who was evidently grateful for Pope's assistance, is seen to be warmly pressing upon him some pecuniary present, which he at first is equally steadfast in declining (Letter No. 13, dated 'Saturday Twitnam'), but which by January 18, 1743, he has been prevailed upon to accept. The correspondence continues through 1743 and perhaps into 1744, and

the whole tenor of it makes it incredible that Pope should have intended to publish the character of Atossa as a satire upon the Duchess of Marlborough. It must therefore be accepted as an indirect demonstration that it was his intention, when the verses appeared, to proclaim them to be the portrait of Katherine, Duchess of Buckingham, with whom he had quarrelled, and who was already dead.

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1. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Aug. 13*th*, 1741.

I DESIRE to address your Grace with all simplicity of heart like a poor Indian, and prefer my petition to you with an offering of my best fruits (all I am worth, for gold and silver I have none tho' the Indians had). Accept, therefore, of these pine-apples, and be so good as to let me follow them to Wimbledon next Sunday (for the day after I am to entertain some lawyers upon venison, if I can get it). I will trouble your Grace's coach no further than to fetch me at whatever hour that morning you like, and if you please I will bring with me a friend of my Lord Marchmont's and therefore of yours and mine. I have provided myself of some horses for my own chariot to bring me back. I could not postpone any longer this pleasure, since you gave me some hopes it was to lead to an honour I've so often been disappointed of, the seeing your Grace a few hours at Twickenham in my grotto.

2. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Saturday. [1741.]

YOUR letter is too good for one to answer, but not to acknowledge. I confine myself to one particular of it. I don't wonder some say you are mad, you act so contrary to the rest of the world, and it was the madman's argument for his own being sober, that the majority had prevailed and had locked up the few that were so. Horace (the first of the name, who was no fool[1]) has settled this matter, and writ a whole discourse

[1] A stroke at Horace Walpole, brother of Sir Robert.

to show that all folks are mad (even poets and kings not excepted), he only begs one favour, that the greater madmen would spare the lesser. Would those whom your Grace has cause to complain of, and those whom we have all cause to complain of, but do so, not only you, and I, but the whole nation might be saved. Your present of a buck is indeed a proper one for an Indian, one of the true species of Indians (who seeks not for gold and silver but only for necessaries). But I must add, to my shame, I am one of that sort who at his heart loves bawbles better, and throws away his gold and silver for shells and glittering stones, as you will find when you see (for you must see) my Grotto. What then does your Grace think of bringing me back in your coach about five, and supping there, now the moonlight favours your return, by which means you will be tired of what you are now pleased to call good company, and I happy for six or seven hours together? In short I will put myself into your power to bring, send, or expel me back as you please. P.S.—The friend of Lord Marchmont is yours already, and cleared of all prepossessions, so that you can make no fresh conquests of him as you have of me.[1]

3. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

[1741.]

I CAN say nothing to your Grace that is pretty or in the way of a wit, which I thank God was never the character of me in my writing. But I honestly thank you; you are directly kind to me, and I shall love you. This is very ill bred, but it is true and I cannot help it. The papers you favoured me with shew so much goodness, and so much frankness of nature, that I should be sorry you ever thought of writing them better, or of suffering any other to do so. In a word your conquest will be complete over me, but you conquer a cripple that would follow you, but cannot. You are the last person that shall ever see him sleep, tho' he has been, some years,

[1] Hooke is probably the friend referred to.

fast asleep to all other great people. If your Grace dares to try next Saturday how long he can talk, at least in his own chair, pray come at any hour and see. I am to be from home till then, and then indeed Mr. Hooke and his daughter are to be here; so that if your Grace likes me best alone, I will wait for this pleasure any other day after Sunday, and will then return into your hand the very obliging deposit you intrusted me with, and which I esteem as I ought, a particular mark of the friendship your Grace honours me with. P.S.—It is so late, and my eyes so bad towards night, that I beg you to excuse what is hardly legible to my own. I hope in God it is more legible to yours, even at your age.

4. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

[1741.]

YOUR Grace will excuse this short note. I was in town from Saturday last, and must be there again, (I fear) for two or three days more about a troublesome business of a relation of mine. I am not certain what day I shall be sent for, which makes me unwilling to name one, but I think I can come from Wimbledon to London some day next week, of which I will advertise your Grace. I will not go to Bath while you stay there, that I may have the more opportunitie of seeing you. I send the green book with many thanks by the bearer, which I have read over three times. I wish every body you love may love you, and am very sorry for every one that does not.

5. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

LONDON, *Sept.* 5 [1741].

I HAVE found it out of my power to get to your Grace from hence; therefore if you please to send for me to Twitnam on Tuesday evening, or to come thither any time that day I will be wholly in your disposal. Your Grace will find me upon further acquaintance really not

worth all this trouble, but a little common honesty and common gratitude, for both which I have been often hated and often hurt. But if I preserve or obtain the good opinion of a few, and if your own in particular is added to that of those few, I shall be enough rewarded and enough satisfied.

6. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Thursday night. [1741.]

YOUR Grace's remembrance is doubly kind. I am still at Twitnam, but my friend comes whom I expected yesterday, and we set out next day I believe. I shall leave this place with true regret, but as you said you liked it so well as to call here in my absence, I have deputed one to be ready to receive you, whose company you own you like, and who I know likes yours to such a degree that I doubt whether he can be impartial enough to be your historian. Mr. Hook and his daughter (I hope) will use my house while your Grace is at Wimbledon. You see what artifices I use to be remembered by you.

7. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

BATH, *Oct.* 13*th* [1741].

I CAN tell your Grace nothing of myself so well worth your notice, or so much to my advantage, as that which the inclosed paper will shew you; that I am as mindful of your commands, absent or present, and as much your faithful servant at Bath as at Windsor. The inscription is the very best I can do in this sort of writing, which requires to be so short and so plain. If it can be mended, it must be by Mr. Hooke; but I will venture to say any wit would spoil it. And a writer of plain sense and judgment is as rare to be met with as a woman of plain sense and judgment. I hope you are as well as I left you. I am not, because I have left you, and I will add no compliments because I am truly yours.

8. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Thursday. [1741.]

I CAN'T express to your Grace the satisfaction the reading of your papers gave me, as they are now *dressed*, as you call it. When the remainder is ornamented a little in the like manner they will certainly be fit to appear anywhere, and (like truth and beauty) *conquer* wherever they *appear*. Thus you have my judgment and advice in one word which you asked and (which is more than you asked) under my hand. I have again been forced (it is always forced upon me) to be in London. I am now at Twitnam, and at your Grace's service on Saturday. I name the first day, tho' I believe not alone, for towards evening I expect Mr. Murray who stays and passes Sunday here.

9. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Thursday Morning.

I WISH your Grace were younger and I stronger by twenty years, and if we could not dine out boars (doors?), we might at least plant vines under which we and our posterity might sit and enjoy liberty a few years longer. As it is we can enjoy nothing but friendship (the next great blessing to liberty), if any will last so long as our lives. I really think your Grace has brought about one that will (if not two or three), and I can assure you your new lady, if once fixed, is unalterable, as I have experienced for above 20 years, tho' I never once did her any real service only for meaning it.[1] I fear Sir Timothy cannot part from his child this week (who has left all her swaddling clothes behind her in a ship that has not yet arrived). I would have made you a day's visit myself (for I like you very well when you are alone,) and return'd to Mr. Allen, who comes to Twitnam again this week for three days, but it happens that a very particular friend of mine (an eminent divine of the Church of England) comes to Twitnam

[1] No doubt Martha Blount.

to-morrow and leaves me then. But notwithstanding my regard to divines such as he, I think your Grace's ghostly father, Socrates, ought not to be changed for the best of them.[1] Before the end of next week, or as much sooner as I can, I shall trouble Mr. Dorset and all his horses. In the meantime let it not be a trouble to your Grace to let me know by one line how you proceed doctress in divinity in Plato. P.S.—I ought not to forget telling your Grace how extreme kind my friend Allen took your order for *Bucks;* but he will extend it no further than one, this year. If all his family were not with him he would have waited on you and paid you his thanks.

10. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Dec. 22nd [1741].

IT is so long ago as when I was at Bath that your Grace wrote me word that as soon as you was well enough to let me have the pleasure to see you, you would acquaint me. At my return to town Mrs. Blount (who had sent some times to inquire during your illness at Marlborough House) gave me the satisfaction to hear you was better, what Mr. Hook also confirmed. I have ever since been in hopes of a summons from your Grace; but instead of that you have loaded me with presents, which make my friends happier than myself; for without any compliment you may believe I love you better than your venison. Mrs. Arbuthnot and Mrs. Blount pay you their hearty thanks; I pay you imperfect ones, and can pay you no other 'till I see you at Windsor; tho' your bounty has enabled me to make a great figure at Twickenham these holidays, when I am to have two or three friends. Is not that a great number? I hope they are honest men, but that is almost presumptuous. I hope to see better days next year if, for a beginning, your Grace will permit your poet to bring his ode along with him on the 1st of January. I am, present or absent, with the truest wishes for your ease and welfare, always, &c.

[1] Compare Letter from Pope to Lord Marchmont, Vol. X., p. 169.

11. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

TWITNAM, *Jan.* 19 [1742].

I SAID nothing to your Grace of patriots, and God forbid I should. If I did I must do as they do, and lye, for I have seen none of 'em, not even their great leader, nor once congratulated any one, friend or foe, upon his promotion or new reveal'd religion or regeneration, call it which you will, or by the more distinct and intelligible name, his new place or pension.[1] I'm so sick of London in her present state that in two or three days I constantly return hither. I shall stay no longer there 'till you come, and then I promise you a day or two more whenever you demand them. I truly am concerned at the account of your uneasy ailments, all I wish either my friends or myself is more ease, not more money, which I think beyond a certain point ruins all ease and makes people either poor or mad; *both* which I take to be the case of the ignoble Earl you mention.[2] I fear what your Grace has heard about him is not true; but it would be exemplary and a useful lesson to the world if it could be litigated. I can assure you you are not only as well with Sir Timothy as possible, but his heart is uneasy in the fear he is not so with you, nay he is almost suspicious that I am better with you, and is as jealous as the devil at my writing to you. His heart is as good, and his spirits so low, that he deserves double indulgence, and I really wish you would shew him you are as good to him as you are; for any distinction of that kind would make him happy; for my own part I desire no greater pleasure than to meet again all together and see your Grace well enough to enjoy the conversation without one kn[ave] or fool to vex you either within or without your doors.

[1] Walpole was defeated in the House of Commons January 19, 1742, and his immediate resignation was confidently anticipated.

[2] Probably the Earl of Wilmington. See letter of Aug. 6, 1743, and note.

12. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

May 13th [1742].

I promised your Grace to acquaint you of my comings and goings and all I meant was to keep my word, and merely to offer myself as an idle man whenever you should chance to be an idle woman. I find you however a very considerate one in your obliging memory of my infirmities. I wish heartily your Grace had none of your own to put you in mind of those of others, and that it is as pure goodness in you, now, to forgive my weaknesses as it was heretofore when you forgave what you might justly have been offended at. You are the only great lady that might have been angry at me and would not. So I must confess you to be candid and considerate from first to last to me. In allowing me one liberty you allow me all I want and ask. In that you are willing to leave me your equal, and all the difference is that you *must be* independent in a great fortune and I *will be* so with a moderate one. And those that would take it from me would take it from you if they could, which God of his infinite mercy prevent, and so ends my prayer for your Grace. I think it will be a fortnight before I shall be in the way of troubling you, but perhaps it would be better not to do it 'till you send me a day or two's notice, which shall at any time bring me from Twitnam.

13. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

TWITNAM, *Saturday.* [1742.]

I hop'd to have seen your Grace once more before my journey to Bath, which I find since must be so soon as to-morrow evening or Monday morning. I hate to take leave, and so I should were I to go out of the world, otherwise than by a written will in which I commit my soul to God and my friends at parting. Both your Grace and Mr. Allen have done for me more than I am worth; he has come a hundred miles to fetch me, and I think in gratitude I should stay with him for ever, had I not an equal obligation to come back to

your Grace. I feel most sensibly not only kindnesses done me, but intended me, and I owe you more than I dare say you remember. First, I owe you my house and gardens at Twitnam, for you would have purchased them for me when you thought me fond of them. Secondly, I owe you a coach and horses, notwithstanding I fought you down to an arm chair, and the other day I but named a house in town, and I saw with what attention you listen'd to it, and what you meant by that attention. But alas! that project is blasted, tho' a little one, and disappointed by its being, tho' so little, too good for me. For upon enquiry it cannot be bought for less than double what I was told, and I believe I shall sit down in another (in which I am determined to sleep as well tho' not half the price) a house not unlike myself, pretty old and very crazy, yet possible enough to outlast me with a little repair, and no bad bargain for my heirs, so cheap I may buy it with no imputation on my prudence. It will be laying out my own money well. So that let your Grace mean me whatever good you will, at present I only desire you to send me a new order for Janette Mowat who will want a house and home more than I. You were pleas'd to give my friend Allen an order last year for two bucks, which I think were to be claim'd again this year as you worded it, pray tell me if that was your intention or not. What can I say to your Grace? You think the same things, read the same books, like the same people that I do. I can only wish a thing I can not doubt that you will continue to do so. Be but so good to like me a little and be assured I shall love you extremely. I won't subscribe my name, that I may not be thought a very impudent arrogant fellow. But if you forgive me pray write to tell me as much, and I will declare myself to all the world for your devoted servant.

14. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

LONDON, *Jan.* 18*th* [1743].

IT has been and still is a thing of great concern to me to find your Grace still unwilling (I should rather say unable) to

come nearer to us, and that you will not suffer me to come nearer you. Had you sent away Sir Timothy only to recall another, it had been a natural change in a lady (who knows her power over her slaves, and that how long soever she has rejected or banish'd anyone, she is sure always to recover him). But to use me thus—to have won me with some difficulty, to have bow'd down all my pride, and reduced me to take that at your hands which I never took at any other, and as soon as you had done this to slight your conquest and cast me away with the common lumber of friends in this town—what a girl you are! I have a mind to be reveng'd of you, and will attribute it to your own finding yourself to want those qualities which are necessary to keep a conquest when you have made one, and are only the effects of years and wisdom. Well, if you think so well of yourself, leave me off. I could indeed have endured all your weaknesses and infirmities but this. I could indeed have been happy in contributing any way, tho' but for an hour in a day, to your amusement, and have gone to sleep all the rest (unless Dr. Stephens would have been so idle as to leave his other anatomies for my company now and then). But to be more reasonable in my demands, I beg at least, if your Grace do not speedily return, to know if you intend to stay for any time? or at all events to be informed more satisfactorily than I can be from your porter of the true state of your health. I shall only add I sincerely wish it better than my own, and you younger than I, that the tables may be turn'd, and I leave you a legacy at my death. If I had thoughts of casting you off I would give it you now in my lifetime, and so bid you farewell; but God forbid that your Grace should ever meet with such use from, &c.

15. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

BATH, *Aug.* 6, 1743.

YOUR Grace will look upon my letters as you do upon my visits; whenever I have a clear day, or when less dull than ordinary, I have an impulse that carries me to you, mind or body; I do not go or write so much to speak

to you as to make you speak to me. If I am awake you enliven me, and if I nod you indulge me. I hope what I said about writing no more under Mr. Allen's cover (where I think yours was opened), will not prevent you favouring me under Lord Chesterfield's. I am returned again to Bath, and find he has not heard from your Grace; but I hear you live, and I hope with all the spirit with which you make life supportable both to yourself and those about you. You will neither live nor die like W——n,[1] who wanted the heart to pity either his country or his servants, and had equally no sense of the public or private obligations. God help him (if he will) that help'd nobody! Much less had he learnt the trick some people have contrived of making legacies in his lifetime. The Scripture has a fine expression upon charity,—he that gives to the needy lends to the Lord; and one may say of friendship,—he that gives to the worthy has a mortgage upon merit, on the best of all worldly security. I shall soon be upon the wing for London. I wish indeed it could be on the wing literally, for every earthly carriage is too rough for me; and a butterfly tho' as weak as a grasshopper has the better of him by having wings. I have been trying the post-chaise to get the sooner home, but it is worse than a waggon for jolting, and would send my soul a longer journey than I care for taking as long as two or three people remain in their bodies. When I arrive at London I will endeavour to set up my rest there against winter, and constantly keep my *hive*, tho' not an *assembly*, for I hate a *buzz* and will drive out *drones*. I didn't call those that sleep so, but those that go droning about and do nothing, no sort of good at least, tho' they look bigger than the rest of their species and only plunder the flowers without making

[1] Lord Wilmington, who died July 3rd, 1743. Pope writing to Lord Marchmont says of him: "Three hundred thousand pounds the sum total of his life! without one worthy deed public or private! He had just sense enough to see the bad measures we were engaged in, without the heart to feel for his country, or spirit to oppose what he condemned, as long as a title or a little lucrative employment could be got by his tame submission and concurrence. He loved nobody, for (they say) he has not left a legacy, not even to his flatterers; he had no ambition, with a vast deal of pride, and no dignity with great stateliness."—Vol. X. p. 168.

honey and rob others who can make it. But I'll say no more of these *great ones*. God hates them and you hate them, that's sufficient. P.S.—As you seldom receive any letters that do not first or last beg something of you, I beg you will order your keeper at Blenheim to send a buck to Bristol, directed to the Honourable Mr. Murray at the Hot Well. Not Mr. Murray who is so like Tully as to plead now and then in a bad cause, but a brother of Lord Ellibank, and your petitioner shall ever pray, &c.

16. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

[1743.]

I FOUND myself sorry to have left you, the moment I grew into better health, as I did this afternoon. Mrs. Blount happened to own her desire to wait on you to Lady Fanny Shirley, who immediately proposed to carry her on Friday and lye a night; but as she, Mrs. B., meant to stay longer, and was not certain whether two together would be quite so convenient to your Grace, she has put it off, and I am glad of it, because we may come together next week, when I intend to stay out all my time with you, and I am sure she will have the same desire. I say I am sure of it, because she tells me so, and she never says a word that is untrue. I think I can be certain of waiting on your Grace on Tuesday, but I'll write in time.

17. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

[1743.]

I AM not so sorry I could not have waited on your Grace as yet, as Mrs. Blount will be to be disappointed of shewing you it is to yourself and not for any one's company that she desires to come. Indeed she was very uneasy not to have done it sooner; tho' both then and now she is in very bad health. Lord Chesterfield and I will be with your Grace by

dinner, if I understood him rightly, and perhaps stay all night. As to lodgings, I care not where I lodge so it be under Heav'ns and your protection. P.S.—I have sent your servant to Thistleworth, in case my Lord Ch. be returned from Essex, for an answer to your question.

18. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

[1743.]

YOUR Grace may believe me that my uncertainty is what I cannot help, and that I wisht firmly to have been sooner with you. But I have had some concerns of Mr. Warburton to manage in town, and others of my own absolutely needful before my journey; and I am so infirm (as you but see too well) that I can't do business or pass from place to place so easily as others. I have put off my journey as late as possible so that I will yet have some days with your Grace. I am almost sorry you are so kind to me. I can be so little useful or agreeable from one unlucky circumstance or other, and so imperfectly show you my sense of what you do for me, that I am ashamed to be what I cannot help, the thing that God made me. If you send on Friday, so as we may come in the afternoon the same day, I will not fail, nor will Mrs. B., I'me sure, if possible, for she is perfectly sensible of the distinction you honour her with.

19. POPE TO THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

[1743 *or* 1744.]

YOUR Grace might almost think I told you *the thing which was not*, and which the very horses in Gulliver's travels disdain to do. But the truth is, the day after I sent to your Grace when Lord Marchmont was with you, I was taken so ill of my asthma that I went to Chelsea to let blood by my friend Cheselden, by which I had found more good than by any other practise in four months. But at my return to town I was

worse and worse for the two or three days I stayd there, and still unable to venture out to you even so little a way as from Lord Orrery's. I was unwilling to inform you how bad I was, and am unwilling to inform you how bad I am still, tho' I've again let blood and taken a hundred medicines. I am become the whole business now of my two servants, and have not, and yet can not stir from my bed and fireside. All this I meant to have hid from you by my little note yesterday. For I really think you feel too much concern for those you think your friends, and I would rather die quietly, and slink out of the world, than give any good heart much trouble for me living or dead. The first two or three days that I feel any life return I will pass a part of it at your bedside. In the meantime I beg God to make our condition supportable to us both.

APPENDIX III.

A LETTER

TO

A NOBLE LORD.[1]

ON OCCASION OF SOME LIBELS WRITTEN AND PROPAGATED AT COURT IN THE YEAR 1732-3.

Nov. 30, 1733.

My Lord,—Your Lordship's Epistle[2] has been published some days, but I had not the pleasure and pain of seeing it till yesterday: pain, to think your Lordship should attack me at all; pleasure, to find that you can attack me so weakly. As I want not the humility, to think myself in every way but *one* your inferior, it seems but reasonable that I should take the only method either of self-defence or retaliation, that is left me against a person of your quality and power. And as by your choice of this weapon, your pen, you generously (and

[1] This letter, which was first printed in the year 1733, bears the same place in our author's prose that the 'Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot' does in his poetry. They are both apologetical, repelling the libellous slanders on his reputation: with this difference, that the 'Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot,' his friend, was chiefly directed against Grub-street writers, and this Letter to the Noble Lord, his enemy, against Court scribblers. For the rest, they are both masterpieces in their kinds; that in verse, more grave, moral, and sublime; this in prose, more lively, critical and pointed; but equally conducive to what he had most at heart, the vindication of his moral character, the only thing he thought worth his care in literary altercations, and the first thing he would expect from the good offices of a surviving friend.—Warburton.

For the history of this letter, see pp. 262-267 of this Volume.

[2] Intitled, 'An Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court;' Aug. 28, 1733, and printed the November following for J. Roberts, fol.—Warburton.

modestly too, no doubt) meant to put yourself upon a level with me, I will as soon believe that your Lordship would give a wound to a man unarmed, as that you would deny me the use of it in my own defence.

I presume you will allow me to take the same liberty in my answer to so candid, polite, and ingenious a nobleman, which your Lordship took in yours, to so *grave, religious,* and *respectable* a clergyman.[1] As you answered his Latin in English, permit me to answer your verse in prose. And though your Lordship's reasons for not writing in Latin, might be stronger than mine for not writing in verse, yet I may plead two good ones, for this conduct:—the one, that I want the talent of spinning *a thousand lines in a* day,[2] (which, I think is as much time as this subject deserves,) and the other, that I take your Lordship's verse to be as much prose as this letter. But no doubt it was your choice, in writing to a friend, to renounce all the pomp of poetry, and give us this excellent model of the familiar.

When I consider the great difference betwixt the rank your Lordship holds in the *world,* and the rank which your writings are like to hold in the learned world, I presume that distinction of style is but necessary, which you will see observed through this letter. When I speak of *you,* my Lord, it will be with all the deference due to the inequality which Fortune has made between you and myself: but when I speak of your *writings,* my Lord, I must, I can, do nothing but trifle.

I should be obliged indeed to lessen this respect, if all the nobility (and especially the elder brothers) are but so many hereditary fools,[3] if the privilege of lords be to want brains,[4] if noblemen can hardly write or read,[5] if all their business is but

[1] Dr. Sherwin.—WARBURTON.

[2] "And *Pope,* with justice, of such lines may say,
His Lordship spins a thousand in a day."
Epist. p. 6.—WARBURTON.

[3] "That to good blood by old prescriptive rules,
Gives right hereditary to be fools."—WARBURTON.

[4] "Nor wonder that my brain no more affords,
But recollect the privilege of Lords."—WARBURTON.

[5] "And when you see me fairly write my name;
For England's sake wish all could do the same."—WARBURTON.

to dress and vote,[1] and all their employment in court, to tell lies, flatter in public, slander in private, be false to each other, and follow nothing but self-interest.[2] Bless me, my Lord, what an account is this you give of them? and what would have been said of me, had I immolated, in this manner, the whole body of the nobility, at the stall of a well-fed prebendary?

Were it the mere excess of your Lordship's wit, that carried you thus triumphantly over all the bounds of decency, I might consider your Lordship on your Pegasus, as a sprightly hunter on a mettled horse; and while you were trampling down all our works, patiently suffer the injury, in pure admiration of the noble sport. But should the case be quite otherwise should your Lordship be only like a boy that is run away with; and run away with by a very foal; really common charity, as well as respect for a noble family, would oblige me to stop your career, and to help you down from this Pegasus.

Surely the little praise of a *writer* should be a thing below your ambition: you, who were no sooner born, but in the lap of the Graces; no sooner at school, but in the arms of the Muses; no sooner in the world, but you practised all the skill of it; no sooner in the court, but you possessed all the art of it! Unrivalled as you are, in making a figure, and in making a speech, methinks, my Lord, you may well give up the poor talent of turning a distich. And why this fondness for poetry? Prose admits of the two excellences you most admire, diction and fiction; it admits of the talents you chiefly possess, a most fertile invention, and most florid expression; it is with prose, nay the plainest prose, that you best could teach our nobility to vote, which you justly observe, is half at least of their business:[3] and give me leave to prophesy, it is to your talent in prose, and not in verse, to your speaking, not

[1] "Whilst all our business is, to dress and vote."
Epist. p. 6.—WARBURTON.

[2] "Courts are only larger families,
The growth of each, few truths, and many lies:
——— in private satirize, in public flatter.
Few to each other, all to one point true;
Which one I shan't, nor need explain. Adieu."
P. ult.—WARBURTON.

[3] "All their business is, to dress and vote."—WARBURTON.

your writing, to your art at court, not your art of poetry, that your Lordship must owe your future figure in the world.

My Lord, whatever you imagine, this is the advice of a friend, and one who remembers he formerly had the honour of some profession of friendship from you: whatever was his real share in it, whether small or great, yet as your Lordship could never have had the least *loss* by continuing it, or the least interest by withdrawing it, the misfortune of losing it, I fear, must have been owing to his own deficiency or neglect. But as to any actual fault which deserved to forfeit it in such a degree, he protests he is to this day guiltless and ignorant. It could at most be but a fault of omission; but indeed by omission, men of your Lordship's uncommon merit may sometimes think themselves so injured, as to be capable of an inclination to injure another; who, though very much below their quality, may be above the injury.

I never heard of the least displeasure you had conceived against me, till I was told that an imitation I had made of Horace[1] had offended some persons, and among them your Lordship. I could not have apprehended that a few *general strokes* about a *Lord scribbling carelessly*, a *pimp*, or a *spy* at court, a *sharper* in a gilded chariot, &c.—that these, I say, should be ever applied as they have been, by any malice but that which is the greatest in the world, the malice of ill people to themselves.

Your Lordship so well knows, (and the whole court and town through your means so well know,) how far the resentment was carried upon that imagination, not only in the nature of the libel[2] you propagated against me, but in the extraordinary manner, place, and presence, in which it was propagated,[3] that I shall only say, it seemed to me to exceed the bounds of justice, common sense, and decency.

I wonder yet more, how a lady, of great wit, beauty, and fame for her poetry, (between whom and your Lordship there

[1] The first Satire of the second Book, printed in 1732.—WARBURTON.

[2] *Verses to the Imitator of Horace*, afterwards printed by J. Roberts, 1732, fol.—WARBURTON.

[3] It was for this reason that this Letter, as soon as it was printed, was communicated to the Queen.—WARBURTON.

is a natural, a just, and a well-grounded esteem,) could be prevailed upon to take a part in that proceeding. Your resentments against me indeed might be equal, as my offence to you both was the same; for neither had I the least misunderstanding with that lady, till after I was the author of my own misfortune in discontinuing her acquaintance. I may venture to own a truth, which cannot be unpleasing to either of you; I assure you my reason for so doing, was merely that you had both *too much wit* for me;[1] and that I could not do with *mine*, many things which you could with *yours*. The injury done you in withdrawing myself could be but small, if the value you had for me was no greater than you have been pleased since to profess. But surely, my Lord, one may say, neither the revenge, nor the language you held, bore any proportion to the pretended offence: the appellations of *foe*[2] to *human kind*, an *enemy* like the *devil* to all that have *being; ungrateful, unjust*, deserving to be *whipped, blanketed, kicked*, nay *killed:* a *monster*, an *assassin*, whose conversation every man ought to *shun*, and against whom all doors should be shut; I beseech you, my Lord, had you the least right to give, or to encourage or justify any other in giving such language as this to me? Could I be treated in terms more strong or more atrocious, if during my acquaintance with you I had been a betrayer, a backbiter, a whisperer, an eaves-dropper, or an informer? Did I in all that time ever throw a false die, or palm a foul card upon you? Did I ever borrow, steal, or accept either money, wit, or advice from you? Had I ever the honour to join with either of you in one ballad, satire, pamphlet, or epigram on any person living or dead? Did I ever do you so great an injury as to put off my own verses for yours, especially on those persons whom they might most offend? I am confident you cannot answer in the affirmative; and I can truly affirm, that ever since I lost the happiness of your conversation, I have not published or written one syllable of or to either of you; never hitched your names in a verse, or

[1] "Once and but once, his heedless youth was bit,
And liked that dangerous thing—a female wit." WARBURTON.

[2] See the aforesaid *Verses to the Imitator of Horace.* WARBURTON.

trifled with your good names in company. Can I be honestly charged with any other crime but an omission (for the word *neglect*, which I used before, slipped from my pen unguardedly) to continue my admiration of you all my life, and still to contemplate, face to face, your many excellences and perfections? I am persuaded you can reproach me truly with no great faults, except my natural ones, which I am as ready to own, as to do all justice to the contrary beauties in you. It is true, my Lord, I am short, not well shaped, generally ill-dressed, if not sometimes dirty. Your Lordship and Ladyship are still in bloom; your figures such, as rival the Apollo of Belvidere, and the Venus of Medicis; and your faces so finished, that neither sickness nor passion can deprive them of *colour*. I will allow your own in particular to be the finest that ever *man* was blest with. Preserve it, my Lord, and reflect that to be a critic would cost it too many frowns, and to be a statesman too many wrinkles! I further confess, I am now somewhat old; but so your Lordship and this excellent Lady, with all your beauty, will, I hope, one day be. I know your genius and hers so perfectly tally, that you cannot but join in admiring each other, and by consequence in the contempt of all such as myself. You have both, in my regard, been like—(your Lordship, I know, loves a *simile*, and it will be one suitable to your quality)—you have been like two princes, and I like a *poor animal* sacrificed between them to cement a lasting league; I hope I have not bled in vain; but that such an amity may endure for ever! For though it be what common understandings would hardly conceive, two *wits* however may be persuaded that it is in friendship as in enmity, the more *danger* the more honour.

Give me the liberty, my Lord, to tell you, why I never replied to those *verses on the imitator of Horace*. They regarded nothing but my *figure*, which I set no value upon; and my *morals*, which, I knew, needed no defence. Any honest man has the pleasure to be conscious, that it is out of the power of the wittiest, nay the greatest person in the kingdom, to lessen him *that way*, but at the expense of his own truth, honour, or justice.

But though I declined to explain myself just at the time

when I was sillily threatened, I shall now give your Lordship a frank account of the offence you imagined to be meant to you. *Fanny* (my Lord) is the plain English of *Fannius*, a real person, who was a foolish critic, and an enemy of Horace, perhaps a noble one; so (if your Latin be gone in earnest[1]) I must acquaint you, the word *Beatus* may be construed;

Beatus Fannius! ultro
Delatis capsis et imagine.

This *Fannius* was, it seems, extremely fond both of his *poetry* and his *person*, which appears by the pictures and statues he caused to be made of himself, and by his great diligence to propagate bad verses at court, and get them admitted into the library of Augustus. He was moreover of a delicate or effeminate complexion, and constant at the assemblies and operas of those days, where he took it into his head to slander poor Horace:

Ineptus
Fannius, Hermogenis lædat conviva Tigelli;

till it provoked him at last just to name him, give him a lash, and send him whimpering to the ladies.

Discipularum *inter jubeo plorare cathedras.*

So much for *Fanny*, my Lord. The word *spins*, (as Dr. Freind, or even Dr. Sherwin could assure you) was the literal translation of *deduci;* a metaphor taken from a *silk-worm*, my Lord, to signify any slight, silken, or (as your Lordship and the ladies call it) *flimsy*[2] piece of work. I presume your Lordship has enough of this, to convince you there was nothing personal but to that Fannius, who with all his fine accomplishments had never been heard of, but for that Horace he injured.

[1] "All I learn'd from Dr. Freind
at school,
Has quite deserted this poor
John-Trot head,
And left plain native English
in its stead."
Epist. p. 2.—WARBURTON.

[2] "Weak texture of his flimsy brain."—WARBURTON.

In regard to the right honourable Lady, your Lordship's friend, I was far from designing a person of her condition by a name so derogatory to her as that of *Sappho;* a name prostituted to every infamous creature that ever wrote verse or novels. I protest I never applied that name to her in any verse of mine, public or private; and, I firmly believe, not in any letter or conversation. Whoever could invent a falsehood to support an accusation, I pity; and whoever can believe such a character to be theirs, I pity still more. God forbid the court or town should have the complaisance to join in that opinion! Certainly I meant it only of such modern Sapphos, as imitate much more the lewdness than the genius of the ancient one; and upon whom their wretched brethren frequently bestow both the name and the qualification there mentioned.[1]

There was another reason why I was silent as to that paper—I took it for a *lady's* (on the printer's word in the title-page,) and thought it too presuming, as well as indecent, to contend with one of that sex in altercation. For I never was so mean a creature as to commit my anger against a lady to paper, though but in a private letter. But soon after, her denial of it was brought to me by a noble person of real honour and truth. Your Lordship indeed said you had it from a lady, and the lady said it was your Lordship's; some thought the beautiful bye-blow had two fathers, or (if one of them will hardly be allowed a man) two mothers; indeed I think both sexes had a share in it, but which was uppermost, I know not. I pretend not to determine the exact method of this witty fornication; and if I call it yours, my Lord, it is only because, whoever *got* it, you brought it forth.

Here, my Lord, allow me to observe, the different proceeding of the ignoble poet, and his noble enemies. What he has written of *Fanny,*[2] *Adonis, Sappho,* or who you will, he

[1] "From furious Sappho scarce a milder fate,
P—d by her love, or libell'd by her hate."
1 Sat. B. ii. Hor.—WARBURTON.

[2] All the topics of contempt, ridicule, and satire, that are used in this letter against Lord Hervey, had been used before, 1731, by the author of a 'Reply to a late Scurrilous Libel;' particularly the topics of the delicacy of his manners, and the foppery of

owned, he published, he set his name to. What they have published of him, they have denied to have written; and what they have written of him, they have denied to have published. One of these was the case in the past libel, and the other in the present. For though the parent has owned it to a few choice friends, it is such as he has been obliged to deny in the most particular terms, to the great person whose opinion concerned him most. Yet, my Lord, this epistle was a piece not written in haste, or in a passion, but many months after all pretended provocations, when you were at full leisure at Hampton Court, and I the object singled, like a deer out of season, for so ill-timed and ill-placed a diversion. It was a deliberate work, directed to a reverend person,[1] of the most serious and sacred character, with whom you are known to cultivate a strict correspondence, and to whom it will not be doubted but you open your secret sentiments, and deliver your real judgment of men and things. This, I say, my Lord, with submission, could not but awaken all my reflection and *attention*. Your Lordship's opinion of me as a *poet*, I cannot help; it is yours, my Lord, and that were enough to mortify a poor man; but it is not yours alone. You must be content to share it with the gentlemen of the Dunciad, and (it may be) with many more innocent and ingenious men. If your Lordship destroys my *poetical* character, they will claim their part in the glory: but, give me leave to say, if my *moral* character be ruined, it must be wholly the work of your Lordship: and will be hard even for you to do, unless I myself co-operate.

How can you talk (my most worthy Lord) of all Pope's Works as so many *libels*, affirm that *he has no invention* but in *defamation*,[2] and charge him with *selling another man's labours*

his dress, and the effeminacy of his person. He is there said "to be such a composition of the two sexes, that it is difficult to distinguish which is most predominant. My friend Horace hath described him much better than I can:

"Quem si puellarum insereres choro,
Mire sagaces falleret hospites
Discrimen obscurum, solutis
Crinibus, ambiguoque, vultû."

And it is added, "Though it would be barbarous to handle such a delicate hermaphrodite, such a pretty little master-miss, too roughly, yet you must give me leave, my dear, to give you a little gentle correction for your good." Page 6.—WARTON.

[1] Dr. Sherwin.

[2] "——— To his eternal shame,
Prov'd he can ne'er invent but to defame."

printed with his own name?[1] Fye, my Lord, you forget yourself. He printed not his name before a line of the person's you mention; that person himself has told you and all the world in the book itself, what part he had in it, as may be seen in the conclusion of his notes to the Odyssey. I can only suppose your Lordship (not having at that time *forgot your Greek*) despised to look upon the *translation*; and ever since entertained too mean an opinion of the translator to cast an eye upon it. Besides, my Lord, when you said he *sold* another man's works, you ought in justice to have added that he *bought* them, which very much alters the case. What he gave him was five hundred pounds: his receipt can be produced to your Lordship. I dare not affirm that he was as well paid as some writers (much his inferiors) have been since; but your Lordship will reflect that I am no man of quality, either to buy or sell scribbling so high, and that I have neither place, pension, nor power to reward for *secret services*. It cannot be, that one of your rank can have the least envy to such an author as I: but were that possible, it were much better gratified by employing not your own, but some of those low and ignoble pens to do you this mean office. I dare engage you will have them for less than I gave Mr. Broom, if your friends have not raised the market. Let them drive the bargain for you, my Lord; and you may depend on seeing, every day in the week, as many (and now and then as pretty) verses, as these of your Lordship.

And would it not be full as well, that my poor person should be abused by them, as by one of your rank and quality? Cannot Curll do the same? nay, has he not done it before your Lordship, in the same kind of language, and almost the same words? I cannot but think the worthy and discreet clergyman himself will agree, it is improper, nay unchristian, to expose the *personal* defects of our brother; that both such perfect forms as yours, and such unfortunate ones as mine, proceed from the hand of the same Maker, who fashioneth his vessels as he pleaseth, and that it is not from

[1] "And sold Broom's labours printed with Pope's name."
P. 7.—WARBURTON.

their shape we can tell whether they are made for honour or dishonour. In a word, he would teach you charity to your greatest enemies; of which number, my Lord, I cannot be reckoned, since, though a poet, I was never your flatterer.

Next, my Lord, as to the *obscurity of my birth*,[1] (a reflection copied also from Mr. Curll and his brethren,) I am sorry to be obliged to such a presumption as to name my family in the same leaf with your Lordship's: but my father had the honour in one instance to resemble you, for he was a younger brother. He did not indeed think it a happiness to bury his elder brother, though he had one who wanted some of those good qualities which yours possessed. How sincerely glad could I be, to pay to that young nobleman's memory the debt I owed to his friendship, whose early death deprived your family of as much wit and honour as he left behind him in any branch of it.[2] But as to my father, I could assure you, my Lord, that he was no mechanic, neither a hatter, nor, which might please your Lordship yet better, a cobbler, but, in truth, of a very tolerable family; and my mother of an ancient one, as well born and educated as that Lady,[3] whom your Lordship made choice of to be the mother of your own children; whose merit, beauty, and vivacity (if transmitted to your posterity) will be a better present than even the noble blood they derive only from you; a mother, on whom I was never obliged so far to reflect, as to say she spoiled me;[4] and a father, who never found himself obliged to say of me that he disapproved my conduct. In a word, my Lord, I think it enough that my parents, such as they were, never cost me a blush? and that their son, such as he is, never cost them a tear.

I have purposely omitted to consider your Lordship's criticisms on my *poetry*. As they are exactly the same with those of the forementioned authors, I apprehend they would justly charge me with partiality, if I gave to you what belongs

[1] "Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure."
WARBURTON.

[2] Carr, Lord Hervey, died November 14, 1723.

[3] Lady Hervey, formerly Mary Lepel, one of the Maids of Honour to the Princess Caroline, married to Lord Hervey in 1720.

[4] "A noble father's heir spoiled by his mother."—*His Lordship's account of himself*, p. 7.—WARBURTON.

to them; or paid more distinction to the same things when they are in your mouth, than when they were in theirs. It will be shewing both them and you (my Lord) a more particular respect, to observe how much they are honoured by your imitation of them, which indeed is carried through your whole epistle. I have read somewhere at school, (though I make it no vanity to have forgot where,) that Tully naturalized a few phrases at the instance of some of his friends. Your Lordship has done more in honour of these gentlemen; you have authorized not only their assertions, but their style. For example, *a flow that wants skill to restrain its ardour,—a dictionary that gives us nothing at its own expense.—As luxuriant branches bear but little fruit, so wit unpruned is but raw fruit—While you rehearse ignorance, you still know enough to do it in verse—wits are but glittering ignorance.—The account of how we pass our time—and the weight on Sir R. W—'s brain—you can ever receive from no head more than such a head (as no head) has to give:* your Lordship would have said, *never* receive instead of *ever*, and *any head* instead of *no head:* but all this is perfectly new, and has greatly enriched our language.

You are merry, my Lord, when you say, *Latin* and *Greek*

> Have quite deserted your poor John-Trot head,
> And left plain native English in their stead;

for (to do you justice) this is nothing less than *plain English.* And as for your *John-Trot head,* I cannot conceive why you should give it that name; for by some[1] papers I have seen signed with that name, it is certainly a head very different from your Lordship's.

Your Lordship seems determined to fall out with every thing you have learned at school: you complain next of a *dull dictionary,*

> That gives us nothing at its own expense,
> But a few modern words for ancient sense.

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[1] See some Treatises printed in the Appendix to the 'Craftsman,' about that time.—WARBURTON.

Your Lordship is the first man that ever carried the love of wit so far, as to expect a *witty dictionary*. A dictionary that gives us anything but words, must not only be an expensive but a very extravagant dictionary. But what does your Lordship mean by its giving us but *a few modern words* for *ancient sense?* If by *sense* (as I suspect) you mean *words*, (a mistake not unusual,) I must do the dictionary the justice to say, that it gives us just as many modern words as ancient ones. Indeed, my Lord, you have more need to complain of a bad grammar than of a dull dictionary.

Dr. Freind, I dare answer for him, never taught you to talk

> of Sapphic, Lyric, and Iambic Odes.

Your Lordship might as well bid your present tutor, your tailor, make you a *coat, suit of cloaths*, and *breeches:* for you must have forgot your logic, as well as grammar, not to know, that sapphic and iambic are both included in lyric; that being the *genus*, and those the *species*.

> For all cannot invent who can translate,
> No more than those who clothe us, can create.

Here your Lordship seems in labour for a meaning. Is it that you would have translations, originals? for it is the common opinion, that the business of a translator is to translate, and not to invent; and of a tailor to clothe, and not to create. But why should you, my Lord, of all mankind, abuse a tailor? not to say, blaspheme him; if he can (as some think) at least go halves with God Almighty in the formation of a beau. Might not Dr. Sherwin rebuke you for this, and bid you remember your Creator in the days of your youth?

From a *tailor*, your Lordship proceeds (by a beautiful gradation) to a *silkman:*

> Thus *P—pe* we find
> The gaudy *Hinchcliff* of a beauteous mind.

Here too is some ambiguity. Does your Lordship use *Hinchcliff* as a proper name? or as the ladies say a *hinchcliff* or a

colmar, for a silk or a fan? I will venture to affirm, no critic can have a perfect taste of your Lordship's works, who does not understand both your male phrase and your female phrase.

Your Lordship, to finish your climax, advances up to a hatter; a mechanic, whose employment, you inform us, is not (as was generally imagined) to cover people's heads, but to dress their brains.[1] A most useful mechanic indeed! I cannot help wishing to have been one, for some people's sake. But this too may be only another lady-phrase: your Lordship and the ladies may take a head-dress for a head, and understand, that to adorn the head is the same thing as to dress the brains.

Upon the whole, I may thank your Lordship for this high panegyric; for if I have but dressed up Homer, as your tailor, silkman, and hatter, have equipped your Lordship, I must be owned to have dressed him marvellously indeed, and no wonder if he is admired by the ladies.[2]

After all, my Lord, I really wish you would learn your grammar. What if you put yourself awhile under the tuition of your friend *W——m*?[3] May not I with all respect say to you, what was said to another Noble Poet by Mr. Cowley, *Pray, Mr.* Howard,[4] *if you did read your grammar, what harm would it do you?* You yourself wish all lords would *learn to write;*[5] though I do not see of what use it could be, if their whole business is to *give their votes:*[6] it could only be serviceable in signing their protests. Yet surely this small portion of learning might be indulged to your Lordship, without any breach of that *privilege*[7] you so generously assert to all those of your rank, or too great an infringement

[1] "For this mechanic's like the hatter's pains,
Are but for dressing other people's brains."
WARBURTON.

[2] "——— by girls admir'd."
WARBURTON, p. 6.

[3] Windham, tutor to the Duke of Cumberland, who was supposed by Pope to have had a hand in the 'Verses to the Imitator of Horace.'

[4] The Honourable Mr. Edward Howard, celebrated for his poetry.
WARBURTON.

[5] "And when you see me fairly write my name,
For England's sake wish all lords did the same."
WARBURTON.

[6] "—All our bus'ness is to dress and vote."
P. 4.—WARBURTON.

[7] "The want of brains."
Ibid.—WARBURTON.

of that *right*[1] which you claim as *hereditary*, and for which, no doubt, your noble father will thank you. Surely, my Lord, no man was ever so bent upon depreciating himself!

All your readers have observed the following lines:

> How oft we hear some witling pert and dull,
> By fashion coxcomb, and by nature fool,
> With hackney maxims, in dogmatic strain,
> Scoffing religion and the marriage chain;
> Then from his common-place-book he repeats,
> The lawyers all are rogues, and parsons cheats,
> That vice and virtue's nothing but a jest,
> And all morality deceit well-drest;
> That life itself is like a wrangling game, &c.

The whole town and court (my good Lord) have heard this witling; who is so much every body's acquaintance but his own, that I will engage they all name the same person. But to hear *you* say, that this is only——*of whipt cream a frothy store*, is a sufficient proof, that never mortal was endued with so humble an opinion both of himself and his own wit, as your Lordship: for, I do assure you, these are by much the best verses in your whole poem.

How unhappy is it for me, that a person of your Lordship's modesty and virtue, who manifests so tender a regard to religion, matrimony, and morality; who, though an ornament to the court, cultivate an exemplary correspondence with the clergy; nay, who disdain not charitably to converse with, and even assist, some of the very worst of writers (so far as to cast a few conceits, or drop a few antitheses, even among the dear joys of the *Courant*); that you, I say, should look upon Me alone as reprobate and unamendable! Reflect what I was, and what I am. I am even annihilated by your anger: for in these verses you have robbed me of *all power to think*,[2] and, in your others, of the very *name* of a *man!* Nay, to show that this is wholly your own doing, you have told us that before I wrote my last Epistles, (that is, before I unluckily mentioned *Fanny* and *Adonis*, whom, I protest, I knew not to

[1] "To be fools." Ibid.—WARBURTON.

[2] "P—e, who ne'er could think." P. 7.—WARBURTON.

be your Lordship's relations,) *I might have lived and died in glory.*[1]

What would I not do to be well with your Lordship? Though, you observe, I am a mere *imitator* of *Homer, Horace, Boileau, Garth*, &c. (which I have the less cause to be ashamed of, since they were imitators of one another), yet what if I should solemnly engage never to imitate your Lordship? May it not be one step towards an accommodation, that while you remark my *ignorance in Greek*, you are so good as to say, you have *forgot your own?* What if I should confess I translated from Dacier? That surely could not but oblige your Lordship, who are known to prefer French to all the learned languages. But allowing that in the space of twelve years' acquaintance with Homer, I might unhappily contract as much Greek as your Lordship did in two at the university, why may not I forget it again as happily?

Till such a reconciliation take effect, I have but one thing to entreat of your Lordship. It is, that you will not decide of my principles on the same grounds as you have done of my learning; nor give the same account of my want of grace, after you have lost all acquaintance with my person, as you do of my want of Greek, after you have confessedly lost all acquaintance with the language. You are too generous, my Lord, to follow the gentlemen of the Dunciad quite so far, as to seek my utter perdition; as Nero once did Lucan's, merely for presuming to be a *poet*, while one of so much greater quality was a *writer*. I therefore make this humble request to your Lordship, that the next time you please to write to me, speak of me, or even whisper of me,[2] you will recollect it is full eight years since I had the honour of any conversation or correspondence with your Lordship, except just half an hour in a lady's lodgings at court, and then I had the happiness of her being present all the time. It would therefore be difficult even for your Lordship's penetration to tell, to what, or from

[1] "In glory then he might have liv'd and died."
Ibid.—WARBURTON.

[2] "The *whisper*, that to greatness still too near,
Perhaps yet vibrates on his sovereign's ear."
Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.
WARBURTON.

what principles, parties, or sentiments, moral, political, or theological, I may have been converted, or perverted in all that time. I beseech your Lordship to consider the injury a man of your high rank and credit may do to a private person, under penal laws and many other disadvantages, not for want of honesty or conscience, but merely perhaps for having too weak a head, or too tender a heart.[1] It is by these alone I have hitherto lived excluded from all posts of profit or trust: as I can interfere with the views of no man, do not deny me, my Lord, all that is left, a little praise, or the common encouragement due, if not to my genius, at least to my industry.

Above all, your Lordship will be careful not to wrong my moral character with THOSE[2] under whose protection I live, and through whose lenity alone I can live with comfort. Your Lordship, I am confident, upon consideration will think, you inadvertently went a little too far when you recommended to THEIR perusal, and strengthened by the weight of your approbation, a libel, mean in its reflections upon my poor figure, and scandalous in those on my honour and integrity: wherein I was represented as "*an enemy* to the human race, a *murderer* of reputations, and a *monster* marked by God like *Cain*, deserving to wander accursed through the world."

A strange picture of a man, who had the good fortune to enjoy many friends, who will be always remembered as the first ornaments of their age and country; and no enemies that ever contrived to be heard of, except Mr. John Dennis, and your Lordship: a man, who never wrote a line in which the religion or government of his country, the royal family, or their ministry, were disrespectfully mentioned; the animosity of any one party gratified at the expense of another; or any censure passed, but upon known vice, acknowledged folly, or aggressive impertinance. It is with infinite pleasure he finds, that some men, who seem ashamed and afraid of nothing else, are so very sensible of his ridicule: and it is for that very

[1] See Letters to Bishop Atterbury, Lett. iv.—WARBURTON.

[2] The K. and Q.—WARBURTON.

reason he resolves (by the grace of God, and your Lordship's good leave)

> That, while he breathes, no rich or noble knave
> Shall walk the world in credit to his grave.

This, he thinks, is rendering the best service he can to the public, and even to the good government of his country; and for this at least, he may deserve some countenance, even from the GREATEST PERSONS in it. Your Lordship knows of WHOM I speak. Their NAMES I shall be as sorry, and as much ashamed to place near yours, on such an occasion, as I should be to see you, my Lord, placed so near their PERSONS, if you could ever make so ill an use of their ear[1] as to asperse or misrepresent any innocent man.

This is all I shall ever ask of your Lordship, except your pardon for this tedious letter. I have the honour to be, with equal respect and concern,

My Lord,

Your truly devoted servant,

A. POPE.

[1] "Close at the ear of Eve." *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.*—WARBURTON.

APPENDIX IV.

THE CHARACTER

OF

KATHERINE,

LATE DUCHESS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND NORMANBY.

BY THE LATE MR. POPE.

SHE was the daughter of James the Second, and of the Countess of Dorchester, who inherited the integrity and virtue of her father with happier fortune. She was married first to James, Earl of Anglesey; and secondly, to John Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire and Normanby; with the former she exercised the virtues of patience and suffering, as long as there were any hopes of doing good by either; with the latter all other conjugal virtues. The man of finest sense and sharpest discernment she had the happiness to please, and in that found her only pleasure. When he died, it seemed as if his spirit was only breathed into her, to fulfil what he had begun, to perform what he had concerted, and to preserve and watch over what he had left, his only son; in the care of whose health, the forming of whose mind, and the improvement of whose fortune, she acted with the conduct and sense of the father, softened, but not overcome, with the tenderness of the mother. Her understanding was such as must have made a figure, had it been in a man; but the modesty of her

sex threw a veil over its lustre, which nevertheless suppressed only the expression, not the exertion of it; for her sense was not superior to her resolution, which, when once she was in the right, preserved her from making it only a transition to the wrong, the frequent weakness even of the best women. She often followed wise counsel, but sometimes went before it, always with success. She was possessed of a spirit, which assisted her to get the better of those accidents which admitted of any redress, and enabled her to support outwardly, with decency and dignity, those which admitted of none; yet melted inwardly, through almost her whole life, at a succession of melancholy and affecting objects, the loss of all her children, the misfortunes of *relations and friends, public and private*, and the death of those who were dearest to her. Her heart was as compassionate as it was great: her affections warm even to solicitude: her friendship not violent or jealous, but rational and persevering: her gratitude equal and constant to the living; to the dead boundless and heroical. What person soever she found worthy of her esteem, she would not give up for any power on earth; and the greatest on earth whom she could not esteem, obtained from her no farther tribute than decency. Her goodwill was wholly directed by merit, not by accident; not measured by the regard they professed for her own desert, but by her idea of theirs: and as there was no merit which she was not able to imitate, there was none which she could envy: therefore her conversation was as free from detraction as her opinions from prejudice or prepossession. As her thoughts were her own, so were her words; and she was as sincere in uttering her judgment, as impartial in forming it. She was a safe companion; many were served, none ever suffered by her acquaintance: inoffensive, when unprovoked; when provoked, not stupid: but the moment her enemy ceased to be hurtful, she could cease to act as an enemy. She was therefore not a bitter but consistent enemy: (though indeed, when forced to be so, the more a finished one for having been long a making). And her proceeding with ill people was more in a calm and steady course, like justice, than in quick and passionate onsets, like revenge. As for those of whom she only thought ill, she

considered them not so much as once to wish them ill; of such, her contempt was great enough to put a stop to all other passions that could hurt them. Her love and aversion, her gratitude and resentment, her esteem and neglect, were equally open and strong, and alterable only from the alteration of the persons who created them. Her mind was too noble to be insincere, and her heart too honest to stand in need of it; so that she never found cause to repent her conduct either to a friend or an enemy. There remains only to speak of her person, which was most amiably majestic; the nicest eye could find no fault in the outward lineaments of her face or proportion of her body: it was such, as pleased wherever she had a desire it should; yet she never envied that of any other, which might better please in general: in the same manner, as being content that her merits were esteemed where she desired they should, she never depreciated those of any other that were esteemed or preferred elsewhere. For she aimed not at a general love or a general esteem, where she was not known; it was enough to be possessed of both wherever she was. Having lived to the age of sixty-two years; not courting regard, but receiving it from all who knew her; not loving business, but discharging it fully wheresoever duty or friendship engaged her in it; not following greatness, but not declining to pay respect, as far as was due from independency and disinterest; having honourably absolved all the parts of life, she forsook this world, where she had left no act of duty or virtue undone, for that where alone such acts are rewarded, on the 13th day of March, 1742–3.[1]

[1] "The above character was written by Mr. Pope some years before her Grace's death." So the printed edition.—WARBURTON.

Warburton inserted this Character in his edition of Pope's Works (1751) with the following Prefatory Note: "We find by Letter XIX. that the Duchess of Buckinghamshire would have had Mr. Pope to draw her husband's character. But though he refused this office, yet in his Epistle on the Characters of Women, these lines,

> "To heirs unknown descends the unguarded store,
> Or wanders, heaven-directed, to the poor,'

are supposed to mark her out in such a manner as not to be mistaken for

another; and having said of himself that he held a lie in prose and verse to be the same, all this together gave a handle to his enemies since his death to publish the following paper (entitled the Character of Katherine, &c.) as written by him. To which (in vindication of the deceased poet) we have subjoined a letter to a friend, that will let the reader fully into the history of the writing and publication of this extraordinary character." Warburton appended to the 'Character' Pope's letter to Moyser of July 11, 1743 (see Vol. V., p. 216), in which the poet denies the authorship of the 'Character.' Warburton's reason for inserting the 'Character' was evidently not so much to deny that it was the work of Pope as to drag in his allusion to the character of Atossa, whereby he asserted, in the only way open to him, that the latter was intended as a portrait of the Duchess of Buckingham, and not, as Pope's enemies declared, of the Duchess of Marlborough. We know that the couplet he cites was substituted for the four concluding lines of the 'Character' in the original MS. (see Vol. III., p. 106); and I have no doubt that this was done, the couplet about the will added, and an alteration perhaps made in verses 137–8, to suit the character of the Duchess of Buckingham. Bolingbroke, as we see from his letter to Marchmont on the subject, was struck with the want of resemblance in some of the lines to the character of the Duchess of Marlborough. For the complete history of the matter see p. 351 of this volume.

CORRIGENDA

IN VOLUMES III., IV., IX., X.

VOL. III.

Page 29. *For*

"Not fashion's worshipper, not fashion's fool,"

Read

"Not fortune's worshipper, not fashion's fool."

„ 59. Note to 'Moral Essay' i. 67. I think the explanation given in the note is incorrect. The construction is inverted :

"Flat falsehood serves the dull for policy."

„ 175. 'Moral Essay' iv., v. 34, note 3. 'Rustic.'—The definition given of this term is not quite accurate. Gwilt, in his 'Encyclopædia of Architecture,' defines it as "A mode of building masonry wherein the faces of the stones are left rough, the sides only being wrought smooth, where the union of the stones takes place."

„ 223. 'Prologue to the Satires'—Introduction. "The Longleat MS. of the verses (see note to ver. 156) cannot have been written later than 1724; and already Gildon's 'meaner quill' of the original lines is transformed into 'venal quill' with evident reference to the 'ten guineas' of Warburton's narrative (see note to ver.'156)." Mr. G. Aitken, however, has announced in the Academy of February 9, 1889, his discovery of a version of the lines published in the *St. James's Journal* of December 15, 1722, which has the reading "venal quill." It is evident that this (which is the earliest version) cannot have had reference to the story about the ten guineas, otherwise Pope would not afterwards have altered an epithet so significant into "meaner." Both epithets were probably used with reference to Gildon's general character, and the fable of the ten guineas was perhaps suggested to the poet's imagination by the use of the word "venal."

„ 295. 'Imitation of Horace' Satires. *For* "Sir John Hawkin" *read* "Sir John Hawkins."

Page 308. Note to v. 51. "It seems almost too extravagant a stroke to make Avidien charge his friends for the game which he sent them as presents." Several critics have pointed out quite justly that this is a misinterpretation of the line

"Sell their presented partridges and fruits,"

which no doubt means that Avidien and his wife sell the game and fruits which have been sent to them as presents.

„ 338. Note to v. 106. The epigram on Tweedledum and Tweedledee is wrongly ascribed to Pope or Swift. The real author was Doctor Byrom. See Vol. IV., p. 445, where the epigram is given at length.

„ 350. Note to v. 13. I think the interpretation I have given of the couplet is wrong. It means "Edward and Henry . . . closed their long glories with a sigh, but obtained at last the gratitude of base mankind however unwillingly paid."

„ 409. Note 2. 'Imitation of Horace,' Book ii., Satire 6. "The Emperor of Austria" should, of course, have been "The Emperor."

„ 411. Note to v. 184. Through a lapse of memory I have stated wrongly that the Prince of Wales had a house in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. His house was in Leicester Fields.

„ 438. 'Satires of Dr. Donne Versified.' Satire iv. 134. "Who got his pension rug." I explained this as probably meaning "who got a bare covering by his pension." I find, however, that Grose, in his 'Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue,' says that "rug" is a cant word meaning "all right"; so that the meaning would seem to be, "who got his pension right and tight."

„ 468. Epilogue to Satires. In Mr. Croker's note to v. 123 "the Duchess of Kent" should be "Duchess of Kendal."

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„ 319. Editor's note, 3 *d.*, v. 153. It is I who am in error, not Pope. Misled by the identity of name as given in Pope's note, I believed him to be referring to Nicholas Harpsfield, of New College, Oxford, whose works answer to the description in the text. My friend Archdeacon Farrar, however, has pointed out to me that the person really referred to is De Lyra, a Franciscan of the thirteenth century, and in his day a famous theologian.

„ 342. Editor's note *s.*, v. 94. I have perhaps said rather too absolutely that "the history in this couplet is not quite accurate." The Ostrogoths indeed never invaded Latium, but if by Latium Pope meant Italy, he would have been thinking of the

invasion of the Ostrogoths under Theodoric in 487 A.D. The first invasion of Spain, answering to the irruption of the Dunces into the polite world, was, as I have stated in the note, under the Vandals and Alans, but these were afterwards dispossessed by the Visigoths, who established themselves in Spain, till they were in turn overborne by the Saracens in the beginning of the eighth century.

Page 343. Editor's note *x* to v. 106. "How could the Antipodes in the time of Gregory I. have known anything of the burning of Virgil, when Gregory himself did not know of the existence of Antipodes?" The answer to the puzzle as I have stated it affords a curious instance of Pope's love of mystification and equivocal meanings. He is alluding not, as seems to be the case at first sight, to Virgil the poet, but to Virgilius, Bishop of Salzburg, who put forward a theory of the rotundity of the earth, and assured his contemporaries that there were people like themselves walking under their feet. This theory was attacked as heretical by Boniface, Archbishop of Maintz, who held that it involved a belief in another world of men, another Fall, and another Redemption. Virgilius, however, seems to have explained his theory to the satisfaction of the Pope, and so far from being punished, he was canonised after his death. The controversy arose in the early part of the eighth century, and therefore long after the death of Gregory 1st, to whose burning of the Pagan authors Pope alludes in his note on v. 102.

„ 343. Editor's note *aa* to v. 118. I have said that Pope's note as to the wars in England about the right time of celebrating Easter is not to be taken literally, as the method of celebrating Easter was settled at the First Council of Nicæa. Dean Milman speaks of the ruling of the Council of Nice as if it had been accepted by the whole Christian Church ('History of Latin Christianity,' vol. i. p. 44), but afterwards, describing the introduction of Christianity into England, he appears to leave it to be inferred that the Roman usage and the Eastern in this respect had continued to be separate; and what Pope, at any rate, is alluding to is the fierce controversy that arose between the Scotch and Roman monks in England in consequence of this diversity of usage.—'History of Latin Christianity,' vol. ii. p. 246.

„ 357. Editor's note *ss* to v. 200. *For* "Magdalen and Clare Hall," *read* "Margaret and Clare Hall."

„ 371. Editor's note 5 *z* to v. 618. The note to this verse in the text is ironical. Though the passage from the 'State Poems' is as old as 1704, Pope's allusion is to Walpole's ineffectual Convention with Spain, and to the forced inaction of Admirals Vernon and Haddock, owing to Walpole's lukewarm conduct of the War.

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Page 20. Note 2. A note of Chalmers is quoted in which he says: 'The reader will search in vain for this last passage in the Book of Job. The first clause occurs in chap. xxiv. v. 12. "They have dreamed," &c., is not in the book of Psalms, although something like it is in the prophecy of Isaiah.' Lord Beauchamp has pointed out that in the Vulgate, with which Pope would have been more familiar than the English version, Psalm lxxv. 6, reads, "Dormierunt somnium suum : nihil invenerunt." The verse is found in Psalm lxxvi. 5, of the English Bible: "The stout-hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands."

„ 180. Note 1. I have explained the abbreviated words in the text, 'Sir Tho. San. himself,' as if they meant 'Sir Thomas Lyttelton (father of Pope's correspondent), Sandys, and Wyndham himself.' But I am now inclined to think 'Sir Tho. San.' is Sir Thomas Sanderson, one of the secretaries to the Prince of Wales, and a prominent member of the Opposition.

„ 545. Note 1. "Hertfordshire" *should be* "Herefordshire."

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„ 421. *For* "Præsigenda," *read* "præfigenda."

„ 423. Note 1. ('Latina' suggested as a correction for 'Lavina.') "A curious proof of Pope's own want of practice in Latin verse composition. For Bentley would never have suggested an emendation involving a false quantity." In making this observation I overlooked what Pope says in his prefatory note: "At si quæ sint in hisce castigationibus, de quibus non satis liquet, syllabarum quantitates, *προλεγόμενα* nostra Libro ipsi præfigenda, ut consulas moneo." I cannot, however, discover Pope's meaning. Bentley pointed out false quantities made by other scholars, but he did not make them himself. See on this point Professor Jebb's 'Bentley' in the Men of Letters series, p. 215.

* * * * * *

Since writing the above words, Professor Jebb, whose opinion I asked, has kindly sent me the following remarks: "The words in the prefatory note to the 'Virgilius Restauratus' are clearly meant, I think, as a sarcastic allusion to Bentley's 'Dissertation on the Metres of Terence,' in which he justified, on metrical grounds, the very numerous changes which he made in that poet's text, and also in the 'Fables of Phædrus.' If the 'Latina' for 'Lavina' was not the satirist's blunder, it was perhaps intended to suggest that Bentley's metrical subtleties might lead to errors which would be manifest in a metre so familiar as the hexameter. The Terence (with Phædrus) was published in 1726, and the 'Virgilius Restauratus' was doubtless especially aimed at that book."

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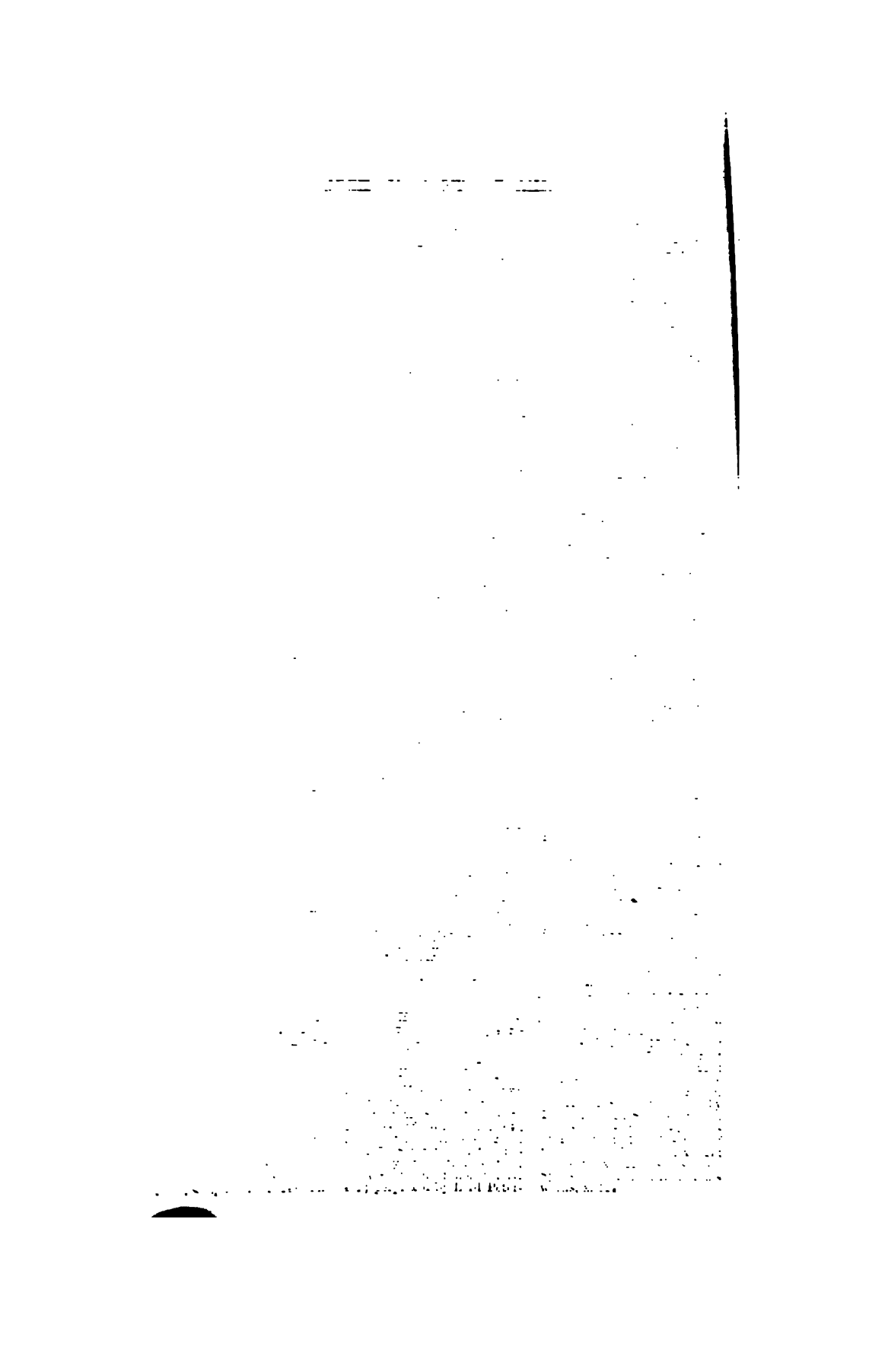

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